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A RATIONALE FOR THE MODEL DESIGNED

TO COMBAT RACISM USED IN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

A Dissertation

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BY

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This dissertation, written by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Nature and Scope of the Study

Racism and its interrelated effects are singularly the most

pervasive negative influence operating in society today. There is

no institution existing in which this influence is not felt. Particularly

this is true of the Institutional Church. The fact that racism exists

in the Church has long since been established, but relatively little,

if anything, has been done about it until recently. One such effort

is United Project Understanding, a model specifically designed to

counter racism in suburban churches in San Diego, California. This

dissertation will deal with some aspects and assumptions of that

model.

It is precisely because this involvement in attempts to counter

racism has just recently begun and not only by the Church, that it is

imperative to criticise any model designed for the purpose of

combating racism. It is essential, first of all, because there are no

experts with definite workable solutions applicable to all situations.

There is no one solution because racism is such an illogical

phenomenon and is so thoroughly intertwined into the fibers of human

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interaction within our society. Secondly, it appears that racism is becoming more intense rather than subsiding, as evidenced by a follow-up study to The Report Of The National Advisory Commission On Civil Disorder (The Kerner Commission) done by The Commission On The Cities In The 70's. The evidence from these two reports tends to hold suspect all previous activity designed to counter racism.[1] Thirdly, we must guard against activity by well meaning people, done in the name of countering racism, which actually becomes contributory to its being perpetuated. Finally, by scrutinizing models for countering racism we are able to meet the sense of urgency, from the black perspective, which makes it mandatory to identify all relevant activity, even that which is minimally effective, and make it available for wider use.

As a black seminarian, it is important for two reasons that I become prepared to the height of my capabilities in the struggle against racism. I use the word prepared because I recognize all persons in black skins are not necessarily aware of the deep and total implications inherent in combating or countering racism. In

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[1]It would be a grave mistake, however, not to show recognition of the fact that definite changes have been made in the level of existence of non-whites in this country. This would seem to be grounds for jubilation until it is recognized that the disparity in the levels of existence between whites and non-whites is increasing.

our efforts to earn an existence for ourselves and our families,

whether we are part of the quotas, set by the Federal Government

for industry, which must be employed, or are in confrontative

dialogue with concerned whites, we may become conscience

appeasers for whites and not be aware of this fact. If I become

contributory in this or some other manner to the continuance of

racism, then the objectives which I verbalize, and at a conscious

level am seeking, are not effectively, much less actually, being

reached. Being prepared thus refers to a level of awareness, not

a state of intellectual astuteness.

In the first place it is the black race which has experienced

most extensively the effects of racism in this country. I am not

unaware of the situations of the other non-whites in this society,

but it is my opinion that in concentrating on the black-white situation

we are dealing with the heart of the matter. This opinion is based

upon my belief that the melting-pot theory to which this society

theoretically adheres has never applied without reservation to

blacks in the thought nor practice of most whites, and it is a fact

with which few people disagree that whites control this society.

The idea of assimilation and the melting-pot theory inevitably

break down at the ultimate levels of human interaction. Even the

most "liberal" of whites frequently fall victim to racism at this

point. Whether consciously or unconsciously held, the traditional "dodges" come forth, "I don't mind for those people, but what will happen to their children?" or "it's O. K. by me, but what about the other people who don't feel the same as I do?"

The second reason lies in the nature of the life work for which I am preparing. As a seminarian it is obvious that I am inclined toward the Church or Church related activity. If the indictment is correct that the Church is probably the most racist institution and that racism is on the increase, there seems no other option open to me than to face racism and be prepared to combat it.

Few, if any, blacks have not had their beings influenced by racism. The tragedy in this is that it is all too possible that the view of life, of what it is that is the highest possibility for human existence, becomes negatively influenced by this white racist society and its institutions.[2] Blacks have been duped, even in the most subtle ways, to hate being black. Duped even to the point of straightening their hair with harsh and harmful chemicals in order to appear as nearly white as possible,[3] or to "pass" if the skin

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[2] I am not implying by this statement that whites exemplify the highest possibility of human existence. Instead, I am saying that whites through their racism are a negative influence separating all men from visions of what the highest form of human existence may be.

[3] A description of this process of straightening one's hair is

pigmentation was such that this could be done without causing

harmful reprocussions to themselves or to the rest of the family. [4]

Nothing can be more degrading than to be forced to deny one's own

birthright.   Yet, somehow non-whites have been made to feel this is

the only acceptable approach to the expression of full humanity and

full humanness.

If racism is to be combated: for blacks, it means that we have

to encounter ourselves and those in black skins who have been so

acculturated that they serve as conscience appeasers for whites.

These blacks are usually referred to in the all too often heard

statement, "some of my best friends are black. " It is not being

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vividly given in the Malcom X, Autobiography of Malcolm X , (New
York: Grove Press, 1966). Pages 52 through 55 describe the
"cooking" process, and the pain he underwent to get his hair to look
as close to that of the white man as is possible. He also mentions
how degrading it made him feel once he realized what he had done
to himself.

[4]The process of "passing" is perhaps the most degrading of all
devices used by non-whites in order to make themselves acceptable
to whites. The full curse of racism is pointed out in this process.
In order for a non-white to have the skin pigmentation and texture of
hair to appear white there has to have been some coming together
between whites and non-whites already. Yet that person could never
feel fully a part of either group. Because the society is structured as
it is, the strong tendency is to deny the non-white portion of one's
being. If the whites with whom the "passer" has come in contact with
became aware of the "passing", strong reprisals are rendered against
that individual. In previous times lynching was the usual punishment.
Economic reprisals are the current punitive actions.

suggested that all black people must think and act in a certain way, but rather that blacks no longer allow themselves to be used as escape mechanisms for whites who would be otherwise moved to make efforts to bring about the necessary change in this society.

If racism is to be combated: for whites, it means a new level of consciousness must be reached. This is to say that the old level of consciousness which has helped to maintain the "status quo" must be replaced by a perception allowing for the affirmation of humanity by and for all people. It means that whites must take seriously racial differences. Strength in this society can come only when racial difference, just as individual difference is taken, not as divisive and destructive, but as the opportunity for each person to expand his own humanity.

If racism is to be combated: for both blacks and whites it means that the perceptions of our institutions must change. For whites it means that these institutions can no longer be viewed as inherently good but rather that they may be oppressive and dehumanizing. For blacks, it means seeing these institutions as oppressive and dehumanizing, but not necessarily viewing all of them as inherently bad.

The model for which this rationale is being provided speaks to these issues. It shows that positive steps have been made and that

it may be possible to counter racism in such a way that it can be eliminated in the days ahead. If this sounds optimistic it is due to my confidence in the model.

Justification For This Study.

It has already been mentioned that information concerning effective models for countering racism must be made available. This is of primary importance and cannot be stated too often nor too strongly. I contend that the model being criticized has been effective, and this dissertation is being written to serve the above purpose. Also, I wish to show it is legitimate and mandatory from theological perspectives that Christians must be involved in countering racism and that the model employed is theologically justified.

Format For The Remainder Of The Study.

In light of the foregoing description of the nature and scope of this study and its justification it is necessary now to describe the format for the remainder of the study.

The focus of Chapter II will be to develop a definition of racism and to offer supporting data showing why it must be countered. This is felt to be necessary because of the wide varieties of understandings

and responses when the term "racism" is being mentioned or read.

I believe a proper understanding of the scope and nature of racism

will help whites who are immobilized with guilt or riled with anger

when indicted as being racist to become active in countering it. It

will help them move past guilt and to realize that the accusation

eliciting the angry response is sound, but for many of them not due

to intentionality on their part.

The focus of Chapter III will be to form a theological base into

which efforts to counter racism can be rooted. This Chapter will be

used to show that "Black Theology" and "Christian Theology" in its

finer sense are synonomous.

The focus of Chapter IV will be a brief criticism of James

Cone's "Black Theology" as he presents it and to cite my own

theological position and to show how it differs from Cone's.

The focus of Chapter V will be a description of the model used

in San Diego. I will show how we arrived at the assumption that an

understanding of the scope and nature of racism helps whites to move

beyond guilt to brighter perceptions of what it means to be human in

today's society.

A main point to keep in mind is that I place primary emphasis

on bi-ethnic teams in any attempt to counter racism. In San Diego

this factor has implications which create dynamics we still are

receiving returns from, not all of which are favorable.

The focus of Chapter VI will be to show the theological implications inherent in the model. It will be shown that an understanding of these implications forces one to be active in efforts to counter racism.

Methodology and Resources. ·

The title indicates the methodology to be used in this study. I will cite a rationale for the model used in San Diego, California to combat racism. Three basic questions must be asked of the model: 1) Is it clear what the model is designed to accomplish ? 2) How can the Church become involved in combating racism? 3) Why must the Church become involved? Questions one and two will be discussed in Chapters II and V, while question three will be the underlying emphasis of Chapters III, IV, V, and VI.

Resources for this study have been written materials; primarily single volume books, periodicals and newspaper articles, plus the insights gained from working in United Project Understanding. The particular concerns studied were writings concerning the nature of man, the nature of the church, the nature of human interaction, organizational structures, organizing skills, institutional structures, history and economics.

The theological writings of James Cone are of particular significance because his theology forms the basis from which I have come to understand the nature of God's action in our world in our time.

CHAPTER II

RACISM

Contemporary thinking and literature concerning the nature of

human interaction has recognized "racism" to be a primary ill in

today's society. Writers in the field of theology are well represented

in this group. In fact, more and more theologians are becoming

aware of the extent to which "racism" plays a part in the total

make-up of the Church. It is from a Christian perspective that we

must view activity designed to counter or combat racism.

I. WHY DEFINE RACISM?

In all the years that the effects of "racism" have permeated

society it was only in the middle to the latter part of the sixties that

the more perceptive whites began to gain an understanding of the

true nature of "racism" and its depth in our society. A particularly

noteworthy writing which shows recognition that "racism" is a

major factor in human interaction in this country is the <u>Report Of

The National Advisory Commission On Civil Disorder.</u> This report

clerly reveals "racism" to be a primary factor involved in the cause

of the civil disorders in the non-white communities during the

sixties. Yet, the commission does not use the word "racism" with

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any definitive expression which would give immediate understanding as to what is actually meant by the word.

A major fault I find with most writings concerning human interaction is the fact that their attempts to explicate the tension producing concept "racism" cause more confusion than enlightenment My intention is that this effort avoids further confusion. In fact, one goal is to help reduce the confusion which arises when the word "racism" is read or heard.

It is essential that the reader become aware of what "racism" is in order that he might avoid definitions which simply indicate that "racism" is there, it is a fact, and its definition is in its observation. For many, however, this is their best definition. They have no other insights which will allow them to be more explicit. This is a significant factor contributing to the negative response to the Report of the Kerner Commission after it initially had received a fairly wide spread positive response.

The report caused great inner tensions but did not give the individual any clear handles he could use in responding to the heavy indictment it made. Except, of course, the traditional activity of curing "black pathology" by somehow changing black people. But it is exactly this point that caused the indictment to be made; the pathology is not limited to the black community. The most visible

effects may appear in the black community but the pathology is in the white people and white society. Thus the dilemma: If the problem lies outside black people and the black community, how can it (the problem) be solved by curing "black pathology?" Many whites who recognized this dichotomy saw it as an escape mechanism through which they could rid themselves of the guilt produced by the indictment of racism. If the report by the Commission could not be more exact than it was then it really was not to be held in very high esteem and could thus be dismissed.

An emphatic endorsement of the indictment by the Kerner Commission must be made if one is at all aware of the dynamics within this society. The shortcoming of the report was in not making suggestions as to how white society could change, if in fact it can be changed. (The if must be stated due to the thorough institutionalization of racism.) Changing black people will not be a cure for racism in this society. The cure lies in changing white people and white society.

The Kerner Commission summed up its vast findings neatly in the following phrase.

> What white Americans have never fully understood -- but
> what the Negro can never forget -- is that white society
> is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions
> created it, white institutions maintain it, and white

society condones it.[1]

Here the dilemma and the dichotomy is stated. The essence of "racism" is described as the ill but "racism" is not clearly defined, nor is it in any other place in the Kerner Commission's report.

In spite of the wealth of statistical data and other documented materials and information supporting the indictment by the Commission many whites felt and still do feel that it was speaking to a very small segment of the white community. They did not think themselves to be prejudiced nor bigoted and would not accept the implication that they too were a part of the cause of the disorder. Their problem was the failure to differentiate "racism" from bigotry and prejudice.

Most non-whites grasp immediately what the commission intended. For whites, however, the "how", "why", and "what", questions are immediately raised. "How are whites implicated?" "What is meant by the statement, 'white society condones it'?" "I am white and this certainly does not apply to me", they say.

The statement by some whites that they do not feel prejudiced or see themselves as bigots is one that can be rightly made and held.

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[1]The National Advisory Commission On Civil Disorder, Report. (New York: Bantam Books, 1968) p. 2.

"Racism", however, goes much more deeply into human interaction. It goes more deeply than individual responsibility for the contemporary conditions in society. Yet, both are integral parts of "racism".

Precisely because there is such confusion we must clearly and specifically define the term.

II. RACISM DEFINED

In his book The Nature of Prejudice, Gordon Allport defines prejudice as "avertive or hostile attitudes toward a person who belongs to a group simply, because he belongs to that group."[2] Too often this or similarly worded definitions are thought of as "racism". Granted, negative prejudice is a foundation upon which "racism" is built, but, one must recognize that prejudice can be either positive or negative. "Racism", on the other hand, is always negative. Allport recognizes the negative and positive nature of prejudice and chose to deal with the negative aspects in his book. His attempt was to show that this form of prejudice is a factor contributing to disharmony in human interactions. I feel, however, that he did not go on to show the power relationship

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[2]Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1958), p. 8.

separating "racism" from prejudice.

Attitudes themselves are not necessarily harmful. It is when these attitudes are translated into some sort of activity or behavior that harm is done. It is not necessary that the activity be intended, but if nothing is done to counter the harmful effects with respect to negative prejudice in human interaction, we move from prejudice to "racism". This is the type of thing Rollo May refers to in his book <u>Love and Will</u> when he states that "the opposite of love is not hate but apathy."[3] When one can be apathetic in the face of all the misery caused by depraved human interaction he has long since moved past being merely prejudiced. When institutions form the basis from which the misery is generated they too are racist.

Prejudice has inherent prejudging in it but "racism" extends beyond this. Allport states "perhaps the briefest of all definitions of prejudice is 'thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant!' This crisp phrasing contains the two essential ingredients of all definitions -- reference to unfounded judgment and negative thought process."[4] But the ingredients must be combined in such a manner that they are intelligible. Thus he adds to his definition of prejudice

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[3]Rollo May, <u>Love and Will</u>. (New York: Norton, 1969) p. 29.

[4]Allport, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>.

and it becomes "an avertive or hostile attitude toward a person
who belongs to a group, simply, because he belongs to that group,
and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities
ascribed to the group."[5] This is movement toward an acceptable
definition of racism.

This movement leads us to the definition found in Webster's
New Illustrated Dictionary, which is "the assumption of inherent
superiority of one race over another." This definition again is not
comprehensive enough to clarify the widespread confusion which
arises as the word racism is used. The confusion comes when the
myths of superiority and interiority are argued while the cultural
norms and standards by which achievement is measured and set
are determined by one race. When we add this definition of "racism"
to Allport's definition of prejudice we have come a long way toward
an acceptable definition of "racism" but there is still the
possibility of confusion and misunderstandings.

Another distinction which must be made between prejudice and
"racism" is that prejudice seems to be an individual phenomenon
while "racism" can be either individual or institutional. In fact,
it is the institutionalizing of prejudice that brings "racism" into

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[5]Ibid.

being. Individual "racism" comes as an individual partakes of the goods and services of institutions and acts to maintain these institutions in order to continue to receive these goods and services. Individuals can be prejudiced against individuals but when groups of individuals pool their prejudices against another group of individuals because of race, and institute sanctioned behavior patterns against that group, "racism" is born.

By becoming aware of both the individual and institutional nature of "racism" it is immediately apparent that its most devastating form occurs institutionally. That this is true is obvious when one considers the "liberal" who strives diligently to eradicate his individual "racism", and to a great extent achieves this goal, but finds that this effort has not, in any stretch of the imagination, altered the dehumanizing process existent in soceity. With this awareness the crux of what it means to combat racism emerges. It is also the point at which those of weak commitment fall away. To combat "racism" literally means to operate in such a manner that, for whites, the institutions from which their livelihood has come <u>must be drastically altered if not completely destroyed.</u>

To fully understand the point made above it is necessary to look at the differentiating aspects between individual and institutional

"racism". This can be done rather quickly be describing an

incident in which both individual and institutional "racism" occur.

> The murder by KKK members and law enforcement
> officials of three civil rights workers in Mississippi was
> an act of individual racism. That the sovereign State of
> Mississippi refused to indict the killers was institutional
> racism. The individual act by racist bigots went
> unpunished in Mississippi because of the policies,
> precedents and practices that are an integral part of that
> State's legal institution. [6]

But even more than this, the indictment and imprisonment of these

bigots by the legal institutions would not have altered the dynamics

which gave the bigots the confidence (white supremacy), to commit

such a dastardly act in the first place. The whole of this nation's

cultural norms are based on racism. And the institutions are geared

to promote the culture. The result of this then, is that the whole

idea of white supremacy is imbedded in the culture and promoted

through its institutions. It is the changing of this concept and these

practices that is dictated for our time.

Since there is that strong connection between individual and

institutional racism, and yet the strong confusion between the two,

there is the need for further explication of racism's institutional

nature. Knowles and Prewitt will again be cited to help enlighten

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[6]Louis L. Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, Institutional Racism
In America. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 4.

the reader.

> A university admissions policy which provides for entrance
> only to students who score high on tests designed primarily
> for white suburban high schools necessarily excludes ghetto
> educated students. Unlike the legal policies of Mississippi,
> the university criteria are not intended to be racist, but
> the university is pursuing a course which perpetuates
> institutional racism. The difference, then, between
> individual and institutional racism is not a difference in
> intent or of visibility. Both the individual act of racism
> and institutional policy may occur without the pressence of
> conscious bigotry, and both may be masked intentionally or
> innocently.... A store clerk who suspects that black
> children in his store are there to steal candy but white
> children are there to purchase candy, and who treats the
> children differently, the blacks as probable delinquents and
> the whites as probable customers, also illustrates
> individual racism. Unlike the Mississippi murderers, the
> store clerk is not a bigot and may not even consider himself
> prejudiced, but his behavior is shaped by racial stereotypes
> which have been part of his unconscious since childhood."[7]

There is still the possibility of confusion if one does not grasp

what an institution is and how it functions.

> Institutions are fairly stable social arrangements and
> practices through which collective actions are taken....
> Institutions have great power to reward and penalize. They
> reward by providing career opportunities for some and
> foreclosing them for others. They reward as well by the
> way social goods and services are distributed--by deciding
> who receives training and skills, medical care, formal
> education, political influence, fair treatment by the law,
> decent housing, self-confidence, and the promise of a
> secure future for self and children. No society will
> distribute social benefits in a perfectly equitable way.
> But no society need use race as a criterion to determine
> who will be rewarded and who punished. <u>Any nation that</u>

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[7]Ibid., pp. 4-5.

permits race to affect the distribution of benefits from social policies is racist.[8] (The underscoring is mine.)

We can see, from this, that the real enemy to the health of this nation from the social perspective is the nation itself, since it is an institution formed of racist institutions.

It seems helpful now to state some definitions of "racism" made by other writers. This will give one the opportunity to compare what I think "racism" to be with what others have stated. If none of these are acceptable to the reader he will, at least, have a variety of definitions from which he can deduce his own definition. Definition number one is one that is problematical for me because it is more confusing than illuminating. Definition number two is not comprehensive enough to be of much use. Definitions number three, four, five and six are definitions I find acceptable.

(1) In racism we are dealing with an issue very different from that of race as a fact among peoples of the world....
Race, then, is not the modern superstition but racism is.
Racism is the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by Nature to hereditary inferiority and the other group as destined to hereditary superiority.[9]

(2) Racism may be defined as believing in one's superiority

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[8]Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[9]Edmund Davidson Soper, Racism A World Issue. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1957), p. 32.

because one belongs to a particular racial group. [10]

(3) Racism is the combination of attitudes, structures, and behavior patterns that have systematically subordinated dark-skinned minorities in both church and society. [11]

(4) Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be reached by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive to human life. The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces of the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first type. [12]

(5) Perhaps the best definition of "racism" is an operational one. This means that it must be based upon the way people actually behave, rather than upon logical consistency or purely scientific ideas. Therefore, racism may be viewed as any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of his or their color. Even though 'race' and 'color' refer to two different kinds of human characteristics, in America it is the visibility of skin color--and of other physical traits associated with particualr colors or groups--that marks

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[10]Dieter Hessel and Everett Perry (eds.), The White Problem. (New York: Commission For Racial Justice, United Church of Christ, 1970), p. 5.

[11]Ibid., p. 3.

[12]Stokley Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, Black Power. (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 4.

individuals as 'targets' for subordination by members of the white majority.[13]

(6) Basically, racism is any activity by individuals, groups, institutions, or cultures that treats human beings unjustly because of color and rationalizes that treatment by attributing to them undesirable biological, psychological, social, or cultural characteristics.[14]

Racism, then, can be thought of as the active participation--whether overt or covert, whether intentional or unintentional--in activities which systematically disenfranchize individuals or groups; creating institutions, customs and cultural patterns that dehumanize these groups or individuals without offering them significant participation in the decision making process which affects their being; justifying these activities as being proper because of race.

III. WHY RACISM MUST BE COMBATED

If racism was a major factor contributing to the cause of the civil disorder during the sixties, it most certainly was a contributing factor in the "race riots" or "race wars" in earlier decades, and shall be the contributing factor in disorders during this decade and those that follow, unless, of course, one of two possibilities occur.

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[13]Racism In America and How To Combat It. (Washington: Clearinghouse Publication, January 1970), p. 3.

[14]Robert W. Terry, For Whites Only. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 41.

The first is genocide of all non-whites. The second is for all of us

as a nation of peoples to become involved in efforts to combat the

cursed disease.

There can be ᴺᵒpoints between these alternatives. The cry for

"black power" has ignited a responding and sympathetic cry in the

other non-white sectors of society. Genocide of just one section

will not prevent the future turmoil. This fact must be recognized

by the "silent majority" in whose hands the solution to the problem

lies. What in all probability will happen is that all dispossessed

persons in this society--the blacks, browns, reds, the poor whites,

the oriental Americans--will band together in an effort to gain

liberation for each other if racism is not corrected. The future lies

not in the "silent majority's" continued support of the status quo,

but for them to become actively engaged in destroying it.

Even more than this, when James Cone came along justifying

the call for "black power" from theological perspectives, black

people were offered a basis for countering racism which had not been

open before. If one is at all aware of the black culture it is apparent

that the Church, the proponent of theology, has been a major factor

in placating black people causing them to accept racism and its

effects by stressing that Christianity is primarily concerned with an

otherworldly reality. Therefore blacks should "love their enemy"

and wait for the "sweet bye and bye when we'll meet on the other

shore". This new vista (the connection of black power and theology),

virtually guarantees turmoil in this nation until racism is no longer

a predominant factor emeshed in the human condition.

For Cone the whole thrust of "black theology" is to justify

black power.

> Black Theology believes that the problem of racism will
> not be solved through talk but action. Therefore, its
> task is to carve out a revolutionary theology based on
> relevant involvement in the world of racism.[15] It is my
> thesis that Black Power, even in its most radical expression,
> is not the anti thesis of Christianity, nor is it a heretical
> idea to be tolerated with painful forebearance. It is rather,
> Christ's central message to the twentieth-century America.[16]
> Therefore, Black Theology seeks to make black religion a
> religion of black power.[17]

What better reason could one have to become involved in countering

racism than to know that his activity is commensurate with Christ's

message?

Of course, this is talk of revolution, but there is no

alternative. To die in a fight for liberation seems much the wiser

choice than the slow agonizing death of dehumanization and

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[15]James H. Cone, Black Theology & Black Power (New York: Seabury Press, 1969), pp. 135-136.

[16]Ibid., p. 1.

[17]Ibid., p. 130.

deprivation.

Certainly these are harsh words but utterly essential to show the gravity and urgency of the situation. The alternative to maintaining the status quo, which is to combat racism, is obviously far less extreme than violent revolution but one which the white society has never recognized.

Moreover, it can be seen in act after act that the lack of affirmative action on the part of the "silent majority" has led to more reprocussions and repression rather than a lessening of repression. In fact, this not so silent "silent majority", in its cry for "law and order" has become the villian in their state of unenlightenment. Non-whites see this as an attempt to maintain the status quo and are then convinced that stronger activity to counter racism is manditory. This is met with a stronger cry for "law and order". We are thus caught in a vicious cycle. It seems the only way out of the maze is for all the people to understand exactly what racism is and for all to become actively engaged in combating its causes. This must be done, while at the same time, the current symptoms of this ill are being treated.

I have shown the survival argument for combating racism but there is an equally strong argument which Christians are called upon to make. There is a duty which Christians owe to all men

irrespective of their conditions of race, culture, class, health, or creed. This is the area of human relations referred to by the writer of Galatians when he wrote "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus... so then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to all men. "[18] This, then, is the duty which all Christians owe to all men, a duty distinct from and in addition to that elemental duty all men owe to all men. It is distinct and additional for two reasons: The first is the understanding and appreciation of the nature of man which Christians have in the Judeo-Christian tradition; the second is the Christian's view of what he himself is in Christ.

If we are asked why all human life should be treated with respect, we are reduced in our answer either to an axiomatic or to a Biblical claim that every man has within him and as an essential and indestructible part of his being a native dignity. It is common among Jews and Christians to refer to this essential dignity of man, the worth and sacredness of his personality, in the Biblical term THE IMAGE OF GOD. Much can be made from this phrase but for our purposes only one suggestion from it is needed. Namely, the

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[18]Galatians, 3:28 and 6:10.

proper focus of the essential worth of man is not man per se, but man as he reflects God, his Creator.

If we find the fundamental value of man, his essential dignity, within man, as the racist seems to do, then is established a condition of varying values and dignities among men; a prorated evaluation of men which contends that the essential and irreducible value of some is greater than the fundamental merit of others. Man is unique among God's creatures not because he is capable of reasoning, creating advanced cultures, and providing limited forms of shelter, but because God made him to have these conditions which makes him a special and preferred creature. Thus, the innate dignity of man to which the phrase THE IMAGE OF GOD refers is universally shared in equal portions by all men, whatever all other circumstances may be. The least of which is skin pigmentation.

The Christian view of man knows no graded scale of essential and fundamental worth; there is no divine right of whites which differs from the divine right of the non-white. Man's sacred uniqueness as a creature is not found in those productive powers which lead to cultural and material achievements; that would mean degrees of sacredness among human personalities. God made man and not some individual men or groups of men in His own image.

By the phrase IMAGE OF GOD we are speaking, then, of

what God has made, of that into which He breathed the breath of life, to which He gave dominion over all earthly creatures, and upon which He bestowed all those distinctions which lift man into a supra-animal realm. This means that we cannot acclaim the sacredness of any man until we acknowledge the sacredness of all men; for the dignity and the holiness are not in man the created except as they are in God the creator. Cancel that innate worth of many anywhere and it is canceled everywhere; deny it to one and it is denied to all.

This is the fundamental dichotomy of human existence, that man is a part of but somehow also apart from the animal realm. It is also a source of the tensions I mention in Chapter IV. Moreover, it is the basic contributing factor to racism because the distinction between realms of animals become confused. That the black man was a slave in this country to the ancestors of the dominant society has definite bearings on who is considered fully human.

> ... the evidence is clear for those who care to examine it. All aspects of this society have participated in the act of enslaving blacks, extinguishing Indians, and annihilating all who question white society's right to decide who is human. ... The crucial question, then, for the black man is, 'How should I respond to a world which defines me as a nonperson?' That he is a person is beyond question, not debatable. But when he attempts to relate as a person, the world demands that he respond as a thing. In this existential absurdity, what should he do? Should he respond as he knows himself to be, or as the world

defines him?[19]

That the white society either chooses to ignore the non-white in this dichotomy or is completely oblivious to its participation in it is the fundamental problem to which Cone speaks and to which Christians must speak. To refuse to speak to this issue is to completely miss the point of Christianity.

Thus it is essentially a rejection of Christ when one rejects another man whether he is black, brown, red, yellow or white. Therefore, the Christian, who is white, and is not active in the struggle to combat racism is essentially rejecting Christ.

The full force of the Christian's rebuke against racism in all of its manifestations can come into focus and into effect only when he is actively involved in combating racism. Then he can and must begin seeing the non-white person not just as a non-white being, but as fully human and fully included in the Christian community. So long as white Christians attempt to deal with non-whites paternalistically the central issue of the dignity and the right of man is skirted. Though most whites would not be conscious of it they have been so conditioned by the norms of this society that full humanity is only seen in other whites. That the non-white is a man with all

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[19]Cone, op. cit., p. 11.

the attributes of that classification few would deny, that the non-whites are dealt with in this society according to the implications of that classification few can claim. It is exactly for this reason that the Christian is called upon to become involved in the struggle to combat racism. It becomes the Christian's duty to make certain that it is understood that "we are all one in Christ Jesus."

The extent to which this is necessary can be drawn from a statement from one of the persons in the congregation during a Dialogue Sermon in which I was involved during the Summer of 1971. "I don't see why you are bringing all this radical talk into the Church. What we should be doing is saving souls, not talking about changing society. Let the other institutions do that, and it seems they are doing pretty well. After all things are getting better for colored people." This statement is heard time and again, though not in exactly the same words, in the Churches in which I have worked these past twenty months.

In the statements above the real question is not whether the church should become involved in the struggle to counter racism, but how it can become involved. The whether question is purely academic. Christians are faced with the fundamental question of the whole of what it means to be Christian. It is not that we have a choice but that our salvation is wrapped up in our involvement in the

struggle to counter racism. This is true of all men. Particularly,
though, is it true of contemporary whites.

I have stated that racism is probably the most pervasive
negative influence operating in society today and that contemporary
writings and current statistics tend to bear this out. Yet a
statement like the one by a member of the congregation mentioned
above can be made in all earnestness by a white Christian. The point
demonstrated here is that both blacks and whites can look at the same
phenomena and draw distinctly different conclusions where racism
is involved. Furthermore, both have a measure of truth in their
perceptions.

This is another indicator of the depth to which one must go if
he is to encounter and combat racism. Racism must be combated,
precisely, because perceptions are confused and therefore must be
corrected. At first this seems an impossible task since it implies it
is necessary to change history. Obviously, it is impossible to
change history. The problem is not as grave as this, however.
What must be changed is the way history is presented. The
ommission from history of the contributions by non-white persons
must be corrected. The idea that if it is done by the white American
it is correct and proper must be expunged and replaced by an
understanding that nothing done by any one group of people is correct

and proper simply because it is done by that group of people. A classic example of what I am speaking about is the disparity between the perceptions of the settling of this country in the frontier. Simply stated, when the Indians were victorious in a confrontation it was deemed a "massacre". When whites were victorious it was considered progress in expanding the frontier. We must present as true a picture of history as possible. A picture that is not slanted to present the American white positively and all others automatically less positively or negatively.

Inherent in the above statement is the epitome of racism and it is an essential reason why it must be combated. Here questions of both Christian involvement and the necessity of survival for all races are combined. As long as one race is believed to be the master race it follows that all other races are considered at least slightly less or of a much lower status. This master race concept is the first step toward dehumanizing those not of the "master race". At the same time races which are dehumanized are forced to move toward full humanity which is the case in contemporary time. This begins the inevitable struggle for survival usually ending in violent confrontation. Examples of this are clear in the number of wars that have been fought in the history of man. To think of any man as less than human is contrary to Christianity and basic survival.

CHAPTER III

THEOLOGICAL BASE FOR EFFORTS TO COUNTER RACISM

I. BASIS FOR THEOLOGY

The term "theology" is used in a narrow and also a broad

sense. It is derived from two Greek words, Theos and Logos;

the former meaning God and the latter, word, discourse, or doctrine.

In the narrow sense, therefore, theology may be defined as the

doctrine of God. In the broad and more usual sense, however, the

term has come to mean all Christian doctrines, not only the

specific doctrine of God, but also the doctrines that deal with the

relations God sustains to the universe. In this broad sense then,

we may define theology as the science of God and His relations to

the universe.

One enters into the theological discussion in the way he can

and from where he is. It is justifiable to enter the discussion at

that point because one can write only from the persepctive from

which he understands God and where he sees God revealed. It must

be recognized, then, that there are as many theologies as there are

persons who think and write about God. However, there are

patterns of thought which can be grouped together because of

similarities in perceptions. These patterns are usually called

schools. Until recently, there has been no school of thought in theology which has dealt relevantly with the condition of the non-white person in this country.

Occasionally, however, there comes along a new and exciting thinker who begins a totally new school, a new way of theologizing. I propose that James Cone is one such theologian. The new school is that of "Black Theology". This theology speaks to the condition of all non-whites in this country. It speaks to the connection between the movement of non-whites for liberation and God's activity in that struggle.

Before that connection can be made we must first discuss the revelation of God and a definition of God. This is necessary in order to show that the God in Cone's theology is the same as the God for all men.

Pascal spoke of God as a "hidden God." He held that this "hidden God" has revealed himself, and therefore can be known. This is certainly true. For, we could never know God if He had not revealed Himself.

How do we mean revealed and what is meant by revelation? By revelation is meant, that act of God whereby He discloses Himself or communicates truth to mind; whereby He makes manifest to his creatures that which could not be known in any other way.

But the revelation may occur in a single, instantaneous act, or it may extend over a long period of time; and this communication of Himself and His truth may be perceived by the human mind in varying degrees of fullness.

It is obvious from the above statement that the existence of God is not a question of contention for me. As we talk about revelation and the definition of God, points will be made which can be taken as proof of His existence.

Kinds of Revelation.

There are two kinds of revelation: general and special.

General Revelation: The general revelation of God is found in nature, history, and conscience. It is communicated through the media of phenomena occuring in nature or the course of history; it is addressed to all intelligent creatures generally, and is accessible to all; it has for its object the supplying of the natural need of man and the persuasion of the soul to seek after the true God.

a. Revelation in Nature: The deists hold that nature is the all-sufficient revelation of God. Many men in the field of the natural and biological sciences, with whom I agree, have testified to the conviction that nature reveals God. They have pointed to the universe as a manifestation of the power, glory, divinity, and

goodness of God. The revelation of God in nature, however, is questioned by naturalist and pantheist. They see no revelation of God in nature. The positions of the pantheists and naturalists are mentioned, rather than for argument, to indicate the recognition that the whole question of revelation is debated in theological discourse.

b. Revelation in History: The revelation of God in history can best be seen through the fact that God has revealed Himself in the history of Israel; in Israel's conception of God and in God's dealing with Israel. It is now possible to see God's revelation of Himself in the struggle for liberation of the non-white. The process of dehumanization which blacks, browns, reds (Indians), in this country experience borders on total destruction of these groups of human beings. The Indians have been almost completely destroyed, while the threat of destruction is eminent. for the other non-white Americans The closest parallel in recent times--to the destruction of which I am speaking-- happened to the Jews in Germany. However, even in the face of destruction, there is survival of these peoples. This indicates, to me at least, that God reveals Himself in this survival. His action can be seen in the fact that there is the surging effort to live a full existence with a new understanding of Him divorced from the god of the oppressors. This new understanding of God comes because He makes it known to

the oppressed that they are His chosen ones.

    c. <u>Revelation in Conscience</u>: In conscience we have another revelation of God. Its prohibitions and commands, its decisions, and urges, would not have any real authority over us if we did not feel that <u>in conscience</u> we somehow have <u>reality</u>, something in our nature that is yet above nature. In other words, it reveals the fact that there is right and wrong even in the universe and that there is a Supreme Lawgiver who embodies this law in His own person and conduct.

    <u>Special Revelation</u>: By special revelation I mean those acts of God whereby He makes Himself and His truth known at special times and to specific peoples. Although given at special times and to specific peoples, the revelation is not necessarily intended for that time and people only. The special revelation is, as it were, a treasure that is to be shared with the whole world. Classic examples of this are the struggles of the Israelites for liberation and the contemporary non-whites for liberation.

    a. <u>Revelation in Miracles</u>: The revelation of God in miracles comes through unusual events, accomplishing some unusual work. A genuine miracle is an unusual event in that it is not a mere product of so-called natural law. A genuine miracle accomplishes some practical and benevolent work. Miracles are

special revelations of the presence of and the power of God. They

prove His existence, presence, concern and power. They are

occasions on which God comes forth from His hiding place and

shows man that He is a living God. But if the miracle does not

create this conviction concerning God it is not a genuine miracle.

There can be no doubt where miracles are concerned. The testimony

itself must rest as proof of the miracle.

b. Revelation in Prophecy: The revelation of God in

prophecy comes through direct communication from God. By prophecy in this connection I mean the foretelling of events but not by

virtue of mere human insight. In as much as we cannot tell

whether an utterance has been communicated to a man by God,

until the time when it is fulfilled or it becomes evident that it will

not be fulfilled, the immediate value of prophecy as proof of the

presence and wisdom of God depends on whether the one who utters

it is in living touch with Him. And this can be determined only on

the basis of his other teachings and the conduct of his life.

c. Revelation in Christ: The general revelation of God

does not lead to any clear apprehension of God, the nature of God,

or the will of God. In spite of the general revelation of God in

nature, history and conscience, people have turned to other ways of

and expressions of the Divine.

A fuller revelation of God was needed in the time of Jesus Christ and He became that revelation. The essence of that revelation is still needed today. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ, for Christians at least, should be sufficient. The question is, "is this revelation sufficient for contemporary times?" For the true Christian, Christ is the center of history and of revelation. But is the Christ of the oppressed the same as the Christ of the oppressors? This question remains to be answered.

Definition of God.

There are probably as many definitions of God as there are thinkers about God. Certainly, there are at least as many definitions as there are schools of theology. To try and cover all these definitions is an unwarrented task in the scope of this dissertation. Let is suffice to say that it is noted that many definitions do exist.

Before stating two good definitions of God, the question basic to the whole argument, is whether God <u>can</u> be defined. Some say that He cannot be defined because a definition assumes we know all about Him. And if by definition is meant a complete view, so that the subject can be properly grasped, so that we can understand, and so to speak, exhaust the subject, it is agreed that we cannot give a sufficient definition. There are ways to answer the question

in the affirmative, however.

One such way is to say that a definition of God is the enumeration of the essential attributes or predicates of any being, substance or thing. In this sense the definition is not complete, but it is not therefore inexact. One may know a thing correctly so far as he knows it, even though he does not know all about it. One certainly can set forth the attributes of God as revealed to man. The genus to which God belongs can also be stated, and the differentiations which distinguish Him from the other members of the genus. Thus one can say that God is a Being and then indicate the ways in which he differs from other beings.

A good definition of God, then, is: God is a Spirit, infinite and eternal, and unchangeable in his being, power, wisdom, holiness, truth, justice and goodness.

Another very good definition of God is: God is the infinite and perfect Spirit in whom all things have their source, support, and end. All other beings fall short of this mark.

II. BLACK THEOLOGY

From this point on we will be dealing with the following equation. Christian Theology equals the Theology of the Oppressed, and the Theology of the Oppressed equals Black Theology, therefore

Black Theology equals Christian Theology. The antithesis of this equation is that White Theology equals the Theology of the Oppressors, but Christian Theology equals Theology of the Oppressed, therefore Christian Theology does not equal White Theology. Both equations may be written:

1) Christian Theology = Theology of Oppressed

   Theology of Oppressed = Black Theology

   $\therefore$ Christian Theology = Black Theology

Things equal to the same things are equal to each other.

2) Christian Theology = Theology of the Oppressed

   White Theology = Theology of Oppressors

   $\therefore$ Christian Theology $\neq$ White Theology

Unequal things are not equal to each other.

To correlate Black Theology and Christian Theology the best vehicle is the struggle to counter racism since the precedent was set in the struggle for liberation of the Israelites. We begin by looking at the forms of theology. One such form of theology may be called Practical Theology. The theology which treats of the application of theology in the regeneration, sanctification, edification, education, and service of men. It seeks to apply to practical life the things contributed by other forms of theology, such as Historical Theology, Exegetical Theology, and Systematic Theology. Black

Theology falls into the category of Practical Theology. Black

Theology is a theology of survival. And it is from this practical

standpoint that we must view Black Theology.

Tensions pervade the world of man. It is these tensions which

give perspective and direction to whatever meaning there is to

human existence. It must be recognized that these tensions have

effects which may be either positive or negative and that the

influence they have on man's existence may never reach his

consciousness. I propose that it is these subconscious influences

which are the source of man's estrangement from himself and his

estrangement from God.

One such tension is rooted in racism and its interrelated

effects. This can be seen in the way whites have been deluded into

a world view which allows vast numbers of non-whites to be denied

full expression of humanity and have not recognized their own

dehumanization in the process.[1] A basic presupposition in my

thinking is that all men, white and non-white, are moved to seek

reunion with God, that which gives men peace with themselves and

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[1]If one human being is dehumanized, all are dehumanized.
This is a difficult concept for contemporary man to comprehend,
especially in a time when materialism and creature comforts are
so abundant.

the world. Reunion in this sense means <u>wholeness</u>, man with
himself and nature, which seems a prior state in which man has
found himself. The expression of Humanity is one way in which this
is attempted. To be denied that expression guarantees estrangement.
When we recognize that we can deny humanity and also have humanity
denied to us, we are faced with the fundamental dichotomy between
our finitude and self-transcendence. We can see the dichotomy
when we look at the history of America where one group literally
has the power of life and death over another group, while at the
same time both groups are fully involved in their own struggle
for existence.

Black Theology deals with this estrangement from God. It
recognizes that everything comes together when the estrangement
of man from man, man from himself, and man from God is
reconciled.

It is improper to talk about estrangement from God in the
abstract. To talk about estrangement from God we must use
temporal examples. There is another possibility however, which is
faith in Christ as the reconciler with God. But this creates the
problem, "with the temporal conditions as they are, how can one
speak of reconciliation by faith divorced from Christ's activity in
the struggle for liberation?" If we speak of Faith in Christ, it must

be in terms of Christ's being the motivator of the non-whites to
strive to cast off the oppression in this society. It must be this
Christ which is the beacon to freedom.

> Black theology... says that the God who revealed himself
> in the life of the oppressed Israel and who came to us in the
> Incarnate Christ and is present today as Holy Spirit has
> made a decision about the black condition. He has chosen
> to make the black condition his condition! It is a
> continuation of his incarnation in the twentieth-century
> America. This means that God has taken sides in this
> struggle; and his righteousness will liberate the oppressed
> of this nation and 'all flesh shall see it together. '[2]

It must be noted here that Black Theology does not necessarily mean
a theology of black people for black people. It does mean having a
particular frame of reference and an understanding of what it means
to be oppressed. It also means to understand that reconciliation
comes only through the liberation of the oppressed. James Cone
says:

> It is not the purpose of Black Theology to address white
> people, at least not directly. Though whites may read
> it, understand it, and even find some meaning in it....
> What slim possibilities there are belong only to those
> whites who are wholey committed to the activity of
> destroying racism in the structure of the white community.[3]
> Therefore, being reconciled to God does not (necessarily)

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[2]James H. Cone, _Liberation._ (New York: Lippincott, 1970),
p. 36.

[3]James H. Cone, _Black Theology and Black Power_ (New York:
Seabury Press, 1969), p. 118.

mean that one's skin is physically black.[4]

When whites and non-whites recognize their estrangement from God in the light of the oppression by today's society of their beings and form their understanding of God in light of that oppression then they are espousing Black Theology.

Man, however, in his conscious activities, reinforces subconsciously, the tensions I have mentioned regarding estrangement from God. The assumption that one can know God and not know the oppressed state of the oppressed is a key heresy of the contemporary times. By participating actively in today's society with its subtle manifestations of racism one guarantees that the conditions for estrangement from God is guaranteed.

Why "Black" to Describe Theology.

The question which arises now is, "why use the word "black" to describe the theology which deals with that estrangement?" The answer to this question is found in the understanding of what the concerns of theology are. Theology has two primary concerns. One concern is to investigate the history out of which it grew. The second concern is to relate the biblical past to the historical present.

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[4]Ibid., p. 205

> On the one hand, it investigates the history responsible
> for its existence, using the biblical tradition as its
> primary sourse.... But on the other hand relating the
> biblical past to the historical present. [5]

But more than this, "theology... assumes that <u>truth</u> has been given

in the moment of the community's birth."[6] The task then is to

unfold the implications of that truth for the contemporary situation

and make sure that the community remains committed to that which

defines its existence. "A community that does not analyze its

existence theologically is a community which has no identity."[7]

Black can be applied to the term theology, then, because it gives

reference to the community of the oppressed. And it becomes the

task of Black Theology to unfold the implications of that truth for the

contemporary situation and to make sure that the community remains

committed to that which defines its existence.

<u>Justification of Use.</u>

The primary sources for the justification is from the biblical

tradition as it relates to the election of Israel, the rise of Old

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[5]James H. Cone, "Black Power, Black Theology, and The
Study of Theology and Ethics", <u>Theological Education,</u> VI (Spring 1970)
203.

[6]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 205.

[7]<u>Ibid.</u>

Testament prophecy, and the New Testament itself. Jesus reaffirms

the liberation theme, himself.

The Exodus: Among other things the Exodus event means God

had taken notice of the oppressed condition of his people and his

Call to them was an indication of his own concern for their liberation.

Cone contends that the covenant based on the Exodus event, "reveals

that he is the God of the oppressed, involved in their history,

liberating them from human bondage."[8] This means that the

contemporary oppressed can also be included in the covenant.

Old Testament Prophecy: The lack of justice was one of the

main factors giving rise to Old Testament prophecy. Cone calls

attention to the fact that God's righteousness "is not an abstract

quality in the being of God...but rather God's active involvement

in history, making right what men have made wrong."[9]

New Testament Justification: The struggle to express full

humanity and the struggle to rid oppression is a theme reaffirmed

by Jesus himself in the New Testament.

> The conflict with Satan and the powers, the condemnation
> of the rich, the insistence that the kingdom is for the poor--
> these and other features of the career of Jesus show that

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[8]Cone, Liberation, pp. 17-18

[9]Ibid.

his work was directed to the oppressed for the purpose of their liberation. [10]

Sources and Norm of Black Theology.

There are six factors which form the sources and norm of Black Theology: 1) the black experience, 2) black history, 3) black culture, 4) revelation, 5) scripture, and 6) tradition.

The black experience is existence in a system of white racism. The black experience has brought into being the concept of "Black Power", which is the power of the black community to make decisions regarding its identity. The black experience means telling the oppressor what the limits are of his behavior. [11] It is the power to love oneself precisely because one is black and a readiness to die if the oppressor tries to make one behave otherwise. It is a source because Black Theology seeks to relate biblical revelation to the situation of black people in America.

The focus of black history is on the unique attempt by whites to define black people as nonpersons. In addition it is black people saying NO to every act of white brutality and enforced non-being.

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[10] Ibid., pp. 19-20.

[11] Cone, Black Power and Black Theology, Chapters I and III.

Black Power is Gabriel Prosser, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Eldridge Cleaver, or any other Black planning a revolt. It is black churchmen who withdrew from white churches because that action was consistent with the gospel of God.[12] It is a source because divine activity is inseparable from the history of black people.

Black Theology is Kergymatic Theology. It takes seriously the importance of Scripture in theological discourses. The Bible is not the revelation of God which so many persons have been deluded into thinking; only Christ is.[13] It (the Bible), however, is an indispensable witness to God's revelation. But it is not an infallible witness. We must use Jesus' behavior in the first century as a guide to our behavior in the twentieth century. There would be great difficulty in actually patterning ourselves after Jesus, but the guide must be held. Thus the Scripture is not a guide that makes our decisions for us.

> The meaning of Scripture is not to be found in the words
> of Scripture as such but only in its power to point beyond
> itself to the reality of God's revelation; and in America,
> that means liberation.[14]

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[12]Ibid., pp. 91-115.

[13]Cone, Liberation, p. 66.

[14]Ibid., p. 69.

For Christian faith Revelation is an event, a happening in
human history. It is God making himself known to man through a
historical act of human liberation.   For Black Theology it is a
black event, that is, "what black people are doing about their
liberation."[15]

The black culture is another source.

> Black culture consists of the creative forms of expression
> as one reflects on the history, endures the pain, and
> experience the joy.[16]

It is the black community expressing itself in music, poetry, prose
and other art forms.

> His revelation comes to us in and through the cultural
> situation of the oppressed.[17]

Black Theology believes that the spirit of the authentic gospel
is often expressed not by the "orthodox" tradition but, rather, by the
"heretics".[18] Moreover, "when Black Theology speaks of the
importance of tradition, it focuses primarily on the history of the
black church in America and secondarily on white western
Christianity."[19]

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[15]Ibid., p. 65.

[16]Ibid., p. 60.

[17]Ibid., p. 62.

[18]Ibid., p. 73.

[19]Ibid.

Let us look at the principle which points to the use of the

sources. The theological norm is the hermenutical principle

which is decisive in specifying how sources are to be used by rating

their importance and by distinguishing the relevant data from the

irrelevant. For more conservative theologians the norm has been

scripture but for the more liberal ones the Bible is one of many

records of man's religious experiences.

> Black theology seeks to create a theological norm which
> in in harmony with the black condition and the biblical
> revelation. [20]

It is hoped that the community's concern is consistent with the latter.

How does theology relate to the community's questions: What does

God have to say about the black condition?, or, what is he doing

about it? What is the relevance in the struggle against the forces

of evil which seek to destroy black beings.

On the other hand, "whatever it (Black Theology) says about

liberation must be said in the light of the black community's

experience of Jesus Christ. "[21] Most recently that experience was

made real by the efforts of the late Martin Luther King, Jr., that is,

he recognized the theological character of the black community and

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[20]Ibid., p. 75.

[21]Ibid.

appropriated it toward liberation.

A prevailing tendency since King, has been the tendency to relate Jesus as the white Christ to the white perversions of the gospel and thereby to deny his relevance for non-white persons. They seem to forget the radical nature of Christ and to say to a people that the Christian way is peaceful co-existence with the oppressor. I must concur with Cone that the non-white community has been and is convinced of the reality of Christ's presence and his total identification with the suffering of non-white people.

III. CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

I have defined theology and have talked about Black Theology, but we must now consider what it is that motivates people to think and talk about Christian Theology. Central to this question is Jesus Christ. For Christians, there is the belief that in considering Jesus of Nazareth we are concerned with God Himself. It is felt that through the person and teachings of Christ we have examples of what God's expectations are for that which He created in His own image.

We cannot talk about Christian Theology and not have Chirst in mind. The starting point and the concluding point in Christian Theology is Christ. Central to the message of Christian Theology is

the presupposition that Christ was and is God's message to the world.

This knowledge must be practical, however. Christian Theology is not only the message but is also the medium through which the message is conveyed to contemporary times. The theologian who talks about loving God and his fellowman and does not have central to this love the liberation of the oppressed is talking nonsense. There will be no reality either in our individual or corporate Christian Theology unitl all men are brought into full being in the scope of that theology.

The first step in understanding Christian Theology is to understand Christian community. To understand Christian community is to understand the individuals who make up the community, for it is the individual which is important to God. Thus the individual must be important to the individual. Christ is interested in the individual as he stands in relation to God. He is not simply interested in a faceless mass. The relationship of individual to individual is a reflection of that relationship to God.

In John's Gospel we are told that at the close of his ministry, Jesus makes clear what will be the distinguishing mark of the Christian and thus the mark of the Christian community.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will

seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say unto you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.[22]

This passage reveals the mark of a Christian not in one locality, but at all times and in all places. It reveals Christ's concern for all men and it reveals who shall be concerned for all men.

Christian Theology then is a theology for all men since all men are created in the image of God. More particularly, though, it is the theology of the oppressed because they too are created in God's image. Christian theology then must be a theology of liberation because it is rooted in Christ who came to release the captives. It is a theology that speaks to all who are oppressed. I agree with Cone.

Christian theology is a theology of liberation. It is a rational study of the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. This means that its sole reason for existence is to put into ordered speech the meaning of God's activity in the world, so that the community of the oppressed will recognize that their inner trust for liberation is not only consistent with the gospel but is the gospel of Jesus Christ. There can be no Christian theology which is not identified unreservedly with those who are humiliated and abused.[23]

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[22]John 13:33-35.

[23]Cone, Liberation, p. 17.

In this racist society the non-white is seen as less than human.
By rejecting the non-white as having been created in the image of God
the whites have also lost the clue to who they are, and because of
this they can find no real value for themselves or for other men.
Hence they downgrade the value of other men and produce the
horrible things we face today--a sick culture in which men treat
men inhumanely. I state this fact of man treating man inhumanely
in this particular way because I feel that contemporary customs and
norms have reached a new depth in degradation. That men have
been treated inhumanely in past eras can be easily verified in
history. What contemporary man has done is to attempt to eliminate
any possibility of rehumanization on the part of the dehumanized.
In history a main form of dehumanization has been enslavement,
but freedom from enslavement has been continuously possible,
that is, until enslavement took on its particular form in this society.
Therefore our society is peculiarly sick in comparison to the
illnesses of past societies.

This is the source of the tension and the estrangement of
which I have been talking. It is from these tensions and that
estrangement that racism is born. It is also because of them that
Christian Theology can be seen only in Black Theology. In order for
whites to reach a sense of union with God they must embrace theology

in a new way. This new way is by recognizing Christian Theology as the theology of liberation. This means the god of materialism which is a manifestation of the tensions and estrangement, must be destroyed and the true God for all mankind appropriated. Since Black Theology is based on the liberation of the oppressed through the message of Jesus Christ, it is in fact Christian Theology.

IV. BLACK THEOLOGY AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Let us explore briefly the relationship of Black Theology to Christian Theology. I agree with Cone that Christian Theology has at its center Jesus Christ. It is also a theology of liberation through Jesus Christ. It is the consideration of God and His activity in the world in light of the contemporary situation of the oppressed community, and relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. Christian Theology can never be neutral. It must challenge the society and its structures that oppress the poor and humiliated. Christian Theology must not and cannot be about the nature of God without confronting that which in human existence threatens one's existence as a person. The primary reason for Christian Theology is to assist the oppressed in their struggle for liberation.

Blackness, in our culture, stands for the oppressed who

realize that their humanity is inseparable from man's liberation from oppression. Thus blackness is an ontological symbol for all who suffer in a racist society and is a visible reality which best describes what oppression means in America.

Since Black Theology rises from an oppressed community it bears the first mark of Christian Theology. Its goal is to interpret God's activity as he relates to the oppressed community. It is Christian because it centers in Jesus Christ. There can be no Christian Theology which does not have Jesus Christ as its point of departure. There can be no Black Theology unless it is centered in Christ's activity in liberation of the oppressed.

> Unlike white theology which tends to make the Christ-event an abstract, intellectual idea, Black Theology believes that the black community itself is precisely where Christ is at work. The Christ-event in twentieth-century America is a black-event, that is, an event of liberation taking place in the black community in which black people recognize that it is incumbent upon them to throw off the chains of white oppression by whatever means they regard as suitable. [24]

Therefore, Black Theology and Christian Theology can be used interchangeably.

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[24] Ibid., p. 24.

CHAPTER IV

CRITICISM OF CONE

AND

STATEMENT OF OWN THEOLOGICAL POSITION

I.   CRITICISM OF JAMES H. CONE

A major function of theology is to define the meaning of

liberation for the oppressed.   The definition must make the oppressed

aware that their struggle to rid themselves of oppression is

consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.   In a society where men

are oppressed because they are non-white, Christian Theology must

become a theology for that oppressed people.   Cone writes his

Black Theology to serve that function.   Black Theology is a phrase

that is particularly appropriate for contemporary America because

it speaks to the issues of oppression and liberation.   Cone strikes

out against intellectualizing about God in the abstract and challenges

white American theology to recognize the inappropriateness of such

a theology as a vehicle for non-white liberation.

In explicating his understanding of a theology relevant to the

black condition Cone makes some mistakes which must be pointed

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out if we are not to make "Black Theology", as white theology is,

a theology of oppression. One such mistake is the identifying of

God solely with the black culture. To do this excludes the

possibility of God's activity in the struggle against the oppression

of the other non-whites. It is understandable why Cone should

feel inclined to write in such a manner if one is at all aware of the

black condition in this society. Black Americans <u>have not been</u>

<u>taken seriously</u> in this society, particularly by the theologians who

write theologies which support the society. The conditions which

make it possible for oppression to occur are as much a part of

society today as they were at any point in the past. To fulfill the

purpose of theology concerning oppression and liberation it follows

that Cone would write a message with which oppressed people could

identify.

Not one white theologian has spoken out, to a significant degree,

against that society which oppresses the non-whites. What white

theologians have done is to legitimize social action in their

theologies rather than social change. This form of theologizing does

not lend itself to correcting the causes of oppression. Cone attempts

to write a theology geared toward social change. The language he

uses, however, tends to blur the lines between the Divine and human

beings. To suggest that whites be excluded, purely because they

are white, from God's activity in the world is to limit him to nothing more than a superior human being, if that. God must transcend human limitations.

Careful listening and study indicate that Cone sounds more like an Old Testament prophet than a theologian in describing injustice in the land and stating that God has selected a people--the despised and rejected--to bring about the necessary healing in the world. It just so happens that the despised who best symbolize oppression are black people in this country. At the ontological level Cone, therefore speaks of God, in Christ, becoming incarnate in the black experience and condition. The real issues of life and death which the oppressed face have not been a reality faced by the theologians who support this racist society. For the most part their thinking has been apart from the people who could best fashion a theology of liberation. Theology has thus been white. The fact that theologizing could be looked upon as a basically white thing forced Cone to write a theology which can be appropriated by blacks. If it is not clearly communicated that black is a frame of reference rather than a physical hue, however, the whole point of that theology is lost and injustice will probably be equally as great in that new theology as in the old theology. At times this point about the frame of reference gets lost in Cone's writing.

We are made aware of what happens when vast numbers of people are excluded from actualizing themselves but Cone is insistent in excluding whites from the union of human beings. It is understandable that <u>new thought forms are needed in the non-white community</u> and an enlightened person understands the necessity of creating a vehicle for throwing off oppression even to the extent of appropriating the Word itself to that end. My point of contention with Cone <u>is whether it is justifiable to actualize at the expense of another human being</u>. The actualizing of one group at the expense of another group motivated Cone to write his theology in the first place. Cone, however, does not seem to concern himself with this issue.

In addition to the problem of man and the Divine it is difficult to distinguish who the oppressed really are. It would appear that whites are at least as oppressed in some ways as the non-whites. Nevertheless, it is the latter who see their condition and are seeking to overthrow the structures that dehumanize their existence. Many whites are striving to uphold the structures of this society.[1] If it is the case that whites are seeking to maintain the structures, one might conclude that those who do not see the oppression in any of its

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[1]The younger generation of whites are not included in those who are trying to uphold the structures per se . There are also certain enlightened whites of older generations who are making efforts toward creating a relevant life style.

forms and have not heard the call for liberation are equally as oppressed if not more oppressed. When one human being is oppressed all are dehumanized. It follows from the above statement that it possibly is not too much to ask the majority society to seek new being in the movement toward liberation, since this is one arena in which God's activity in the world may be found. This would, however, require identification of all men with each other as new values and structures are being built which would allow all human beings to participate fully as persons.

The emphasis of Cone's theology is on Christ, on his uniqueness for man and the world. This emphasis though not stated in supernatural categories certainly does imply a rather supernatural sense. Yet it fails to get beyond culture. Christ in the final analysis never makes it beyond man's conditon. Unless Christ can become what we are we cannot become who He is. For Cone, then, the Messiah must be black. Consider, if you will, what happens when oppression is no longer a part of the contemporary human condition? The Christ of the oppressed at that moment is rendered non-existent. It must be seen that this needed concept of the Christ for the oppressed is the only relevant concept of Christ for the oppressed. But this is a limitation of the true Christ. In fact it reduces the possibility of transcendence to the point that it is possible, only so long as oppression exists. This is the final

shortcoming which I find in Cone's theology. Christ is limited in Cone's presentation of Black Theology.

II. STATEMENT OF OWN THEOLOGICAL POSTION

One might ask, "if I base my theological position much the same as Cone in seeing the revelation of God in the struggle against oppression, why am I working with whites in white suburban churches?" This is not a difficult question for me to answer. It seems obvious that suburban Americans epitomize everything that a black American should despise, from the worship of material goods to an understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ which has not caused them to speak out against racism in all of its manifestations. However a proper understanding of Black Theology leaves No other possibility open to me.

It is precisely beause I do base my theology in Black experience which led to the development of "Black Theology" that I have chosen this particular arena to carry out the mission dictated by that theology. White Americans must also be afforded the opportunity for salvation. I have mentioned that Cone does not allow white Americans the opportunity for full participation in his theology. If Black Theology is the only relevant theological position for one to take in contemporary times, he must not degrade it to the point

that it is rendered useless, as oppressive as white theology has been. What is needed today, more so than ever before, is an opportunity for all men to have creative interaction with Christ. This can be done only when all men are united in activity exemplifying the love of God.

This means that all men must see each other in new ways. It means that we must understand that we are all one in Christ. The Scriptures clearly teach that the whole human race is created by God. All men are children of a common nature. The apostle Paul takes this truth for granted in his doctrine of the organic unity of mankind in the first transgression and of the provision of salvation for those in Christ.[2] This truth also constitutes the ground of man's responsibility toward his fellowman. If we are to understand this scriptural message it means that the opportunity for whites to become active in God's activity in the world must be made available to them, as well as for non-whites.

I am convinced that the church is the institution in which the efforts to counter racism must be lodged. The other institutions seem to have vested interest in maintaining the status quo. However, for the church to be the church of Jesus Christ it must serve the

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[2]Hebrews 2:16; Romans 5:12, 19; I Corinthians 15:21-22.

function of making his message known to the world. "The Spirit of

the Lord is upon me....

Only by becoming aware of the horror created by this society

can the whites find salvation. The provision for that salvation is

in Christ and it is through him that we are reconciled to God. If

one understands that God through Christ is moving in the struggle

against racism it follows, that for whites to receive salvation

through Christ, they too must be involved in the struggle against

racism.

A primary medium through which this message can be

conveyed to the suburbanites is through the Church. I have for this

reason become involved with the churches in suburbia. The

message that I bring to these churches is that in working together

in this effort we are in the process of recreating the true Church.

When one reads through early church literature he finds that

the efforts of the people of that time were directed toward making

the church come to terms with their environment in the world. They

were striving to actualize themselves in a world in which persecution

was the reward for being Christians. It was God's activity through

the Emperor Constantine which halted the persecutions; but only

because the Christians were truly trying to make themselves,

through the church, relevant to that day. The oppression of racism

will be lifted only when the church is relevant to today's world.

It is because we have not been truly concerned for one another that

we have been separated from the possibility of participating in

God's activity in the world. The one vehicle through which man can

gain assistence in coming to terms with the estrangement from God

is the church.

It is apparent that I am concerned for the Church's role in

this country over the past two hundred years, and with the role it

will continue to play in the days ahead. We must consider the past

and its bearing on what is happening now. We must consider what

is happening now because of its implications for the future. And,

finally, we must consider the future because of the new possibilities

it offers.

The perspective from which I view the current misrepresenta-

tion of the church has been tinted by its support of the "structure of

society" which has allowed innumerable atrocities against vast

numbers of non-whites. At the same time I am aware of the

strategic position of the Church in the lives of non-whites from the

beginning of their journey in this country. The question which must

be raised is this, "how can the church remain relevant to all men?"

It cannot as long as it continues to support racism in its many

manifestations.

This is the crucial question which must be asked of United

Project Understanding.

CHAPTER V

HOW RACISM CAN BE COMBATED

I have accused others of not suggesting possibilities which
will actually lead to the countering of racism. This chapter is
designed to make certain that I too am not guilty of this fault.
It is also designed to deal with two of the three questions
mentioned in Chapter I. These questions are: "How can the
Church become involved in combating racism?" and "Is it clear
what the model is designed to accomplish?

I. PROJECT UNDERSTANDING ONE

There are two activities that I feel are designed to correct
the causes of racism rather than merely cure its symptoms.
These activities are: 1) New White Consciousness Seminars, a
method of consciousness raising developed by Robert Terry and
Douglas Fitch, and 2) Project Understanding. I have been actively
involved in Project Understanding and am aware of the New White
Consciousness Seminars through the training done in preparation
for the Project. Some of the concepts of New Consciousness have
been adapted to our style in the model being criticized.

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Project Understanding grew out of an idea from Dr. Joseph

C. Hough, a Professor of Christian Ethics at the School of Theology

at Claremont. The faculty presented this idea to the Irwin-Sweeney-

Miller Foundation with a request for funds. These funds were to be

used to finance a number of seminarians who would be trained to

work for one year in churches in suburban communities. Such funds

were granted and the first of a two year project began in 1969. Ten

seminarians were selected the first year. Eight worked in

communities in the Los Angeles area, and two worked in a community

in Phoenix, Arizona.

Three significant ingredients which are necessary in any

effort to combat racism were stressed by Project Understanding:

1) the training and strategy in an attempt to counter white racism,

2) churches, and 3) suburban whites. Another ingredient which is

mandatory, however, is funding. These four ingredients have been

brought together in the Project.[1]

> Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation granted $100,000 to fund
> an internship program for the purpose of experimenting
> with training and strategy in an attempt to counter white

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[1]These are the four basic ingredients if any effort is to be
successful in combating white racism. By combining these four the
complete life spectrum is covered; employment, education, human
interaction, religious experience and commitment. This offers the
possibility of untangling the tenacles of racism which are so firmly
emeshed into the structure of our society.

racism. The action phase of the Project was to be centered in predominately white suburban churches. [2]

One needs but to reflect on what is going on elsewhere to see that Project Understanding is a notable exception to efforts by others which I feel are less than fully productive. 1) The efforts by the Federal Government have proven miserable failures because they have done little to change the Government or the institutions which it upholds and are the sources of its maintenance. 2) Industry has, in many cases, made changes, but these have not been effective, because possibilities have not been created which allow significant additions to the decision making aspects of industry by non-whites. 3) The schools are ineffective because they are designed to "educate" according to the norms of the white status quo. Unless there is a widespread desire to change the norms of society, the schools and education will continue to be ineffective and irrelevent to the struggle against racism. 4) There is an increasing mixture of non-whites and whites, but total and complete commitment to one another by non-whites and whites is much less pronounced and has not gained widespread acceptance. [3] This leaves

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[2]"Evaluation-Report Project Understanding". (Claremont, California: School of Theology at Claremont, July 1970), p. 1.

[3]Total commitment refers to a depth which may require the destruction of the property and possible the taking of white lives (cont)

the Church as the major institution in which there is the possibility

of bringing about the necessary action to combat racism. Sometimes,

I feel, it is the only institution that has any chance of succeeding. It

appears to be the only institution able to raise the question of racism

at the deepest level. The other institutions deal primarily with man

in relation to his ability to produce for them. The church must

speak to man as he relates to other men, his surroundings, and the

source of his being.

Gilkey points out that there are three possible symbols of the

Church in its long history. "These symbols are (a) the Church as

the people of God, the New Israel, or the new humanity--the symbol

dear to our forefathers; (b) Jesus Christ as the Lord of the Church

through His Holy Word--the symbol central to the Reformation; and

(c) the Church as the Body of Christ--the symbol around which

Catholicism has centered its thoughts."[4] I combine these three

symbols in my thought of the Church, but in regard to combating

racism, the symbol "the Church is the people of God" takes

precedence. To be the People of God mandates that the Church take

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(3 cont.) by whites on behalf of non-whites; and the destruction of the
property of non-whites and possibly the taking of non-white lives by
non-whites on behalf of whites.

[4]Langdon Gilkey, How The Church Can Minister To The World
Without Losing Itself. (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 59.

a stand on the issue of combating racism. It also means acting upon this stand. It cannot be a stand that can be held by one "Administration" and reversed by another. It means that a stand must be taken and the necessary resources developed to make the essence of that stand come into fruition. It does not mean that the issue be resolved immediately but that progressive movement be initiated and maintained. However, it cannot be maintained at a snail's pace.

Becoming "the people of God" can and must be the position of the Church if the other two symbols are to be relevant to today's world. The essence of Jesus Christ calls for radical changes in the face of oppressive institutional structures and society's mores. The fact that racism is so prevalent in the church seems to set the stage for God's action in history through the non-whites in society. It means that through the old church's dying, because of its lack of relevancy in the total life spectrum, the rebirth of a New Church is possible. This is why I sometimes feel that the Church is the only institution through which racism can be combated. God is acting in history through people who understand the message of Christ and through those who believe themselves to be the "People of God". In the movement to a New Church we have the basis from which to minister to ourselves and the world through our efforts to counter racism.

The faculty at the School of Theology at Claremont shares the same hope for the Church. This is spelled out in the report and evaluation of the first year of the Project. "Our focus was upon the white suburban churches. In a real sense Project Understanding was a confession of faith in the church. We believe in the possibilities for change and influence in the church, hence we have given our attention and concentrated our efforts there."[5]

Until this point in this chapter, it may seem that I have been describing Project Understanding, and this feeling may occur again, but I can not get to the San Diego model until I have given the background leading to that model's birth. Moreover, the learning from the successes and failures in the first year and at the other sites during the second year of the Project have been an invaluable help in San Diego.

One significant understanding coming out of that first year of the Project was that the greatest possibility for success in combating racism occurs in a cluster situation. "Cluster" in this sense refers to a group of churches joining together with mutual agreements to have the seminarians work in their church structures as agents whose primary purpose is to combat racism. It was evident that

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[5]"Evaluation-Report Project Understanding", op. cit., p. 2.

things happened faster and in many cases more often in that site in comparison to the sites where there was only one church involved. I feel that the "cluster" situation rather than the persons assigned to that site was the key factor. Yet I am not denying that the individuals had their impact at the cluster site. Three of the four locations during the second year of the project were cluster situations as a result of this learning. The decision to do this was a minimal change in the structure at the project, but of much greater importance for the churches f ming the cluster. The question of ecumenicism had to be raised and ealth with.

II. PROJECT UNDERSTANDING TWO

A second and probably the most significant change in the project is the fact that the training of the second year's seminarians was altered considerably from that of the first year. Rather than go into a lengthy discussion of the training process, however, I will only say that the training was a significant factor in the project. The specific type of training which both groups of seminarians received is reported in the evaluation of the project prepared by Dr. Joseph C. Hough and Dr. Dan D. Rhoades. [6]

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[6]Joseph C. Hough, Jr., and Dan D. Rhoades, "Project Understanding: Report and Evaluation". (Claremont: School (cont.)

I do not intend to evaluate the success or failure of the two phases of the Project. I am concerned mainly with that phase of the Project in which I was most intimately involved, namely, United Project Understanding in San Diego, California.[7] It would require a much different approach than I propose here to evaluate the Project as a whole. Let me say again that the effect of the wider Project is strongly felt in the San Diego Project. The relationship can be compared with that of a family. Project Understanding represents the whole family, while each of the two years and the several sites represents members having ties to the larger entity but also having histories of their own.

In the second year nine seminarians were chosen to work in sites in the Los Angeles area and in San Diego in a region called the Heartland. San Diego is one of the cluster sites. Our two man team came to San Diego in September of 1970. The training leading up to this point spanned 4 1/2 months and occured in both Southern

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of Theology at Claremont, August 1971), pp. 8-16. Dr. Joseph C. Hough, Jr. was Project Director 1969-1970 and Dr. Dan D. Rhoades was Acting Project Director 1970-1971.

[7]The name United Project Understanding was used in San Diego because there was another Project Understanding (different from the one originating at the School of Theology at Claremont) operating in San Diego upon assignment to San Diego.

California and Mexico.

Unitl September the basic effort directed toward the cluster churches was the negotiations incidental to forming the cluster. This factor is covered more fully in the report mentioned above. The churches understood "countering racism" as the goal of the Project, but I suspect that this was translated as being a combined church base from which the "Staff" could and would work in the non-white community. (The word intern was discarded and "Staff" used during the second year due to negative connotations attached during the first year.)

Until the Staff arrived, the many possibilities and directions open to the cluster were mentioned guardedly, if they were mentioned at all. This too was a weakness, but there are certain pragmatic reasons which lend credence to the approach. Among these are: 1) the forming of the cluster itself with the major portion of the initial expenditure of energy directed toward this end, 2) the process of having the official boards of each of the churches act on the decision to join the Project, 3) the necessity of team building within the total group of seminarians, and 4) the need to gain acceptance for the Staff with full status on the ministerial staff of each church.

III.   UNITED PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

How the church can become involved in combating racism is a simple matter.   Whether the Chruch becomes involved in the struggle to combat racism is another question.   To become involved needs but the offering of a feasible plan.   This has been done in San Diego by Project Understanding through United Project Understanding. What United Project Understanding offers to San Diego, particularly to the churches involved, is the unique combination of the desire for relevancy in the fight against racism and a willingness to work within the Church as well as the community to gain that relevancy. Until this time and in too many cases Church people have had to move outside the Church in order to become involved in the struggle against racism.

Project Understanding is a "model" for combating racism. "Model" for our purposes means a designed activity directed toward achieving specific ends.   There is more to be said about models and I will cover that presently.   United Project Understanding is a particular phase of the "model" Project Understanding.   However, according to the definition above, the San Diego phase can be designated a model in its own right.

The definition of model becomes complete when we add that which is necessary to make it effective.   We must consider

activities involving time, expenditure of resources, and people participation designed to achieve specific ends.

Answering the question "Is is clear what the model is designed to accomplish?" is equally simple. The model is designed to create the awareness within white suburbanites that the problem of racism in this society is created and maintained by the white society, "the white problem". The development of this awareness is a means of combating racism. It affords those who are white the opportunity to understand what is implied when non-whites say "Whitey is the problem."

From the beginning of the Staff's work in San Diego, it was very clear that few whites were willing to accept the premise that the problem confronting society is a "white problem". Our first task thus became forming five or six members from the four churches into a "Steering Committee" who had some common experiences and who were open to the definition or redefinition of the problem as a "white problem". Out of efforts to solve this difficulty the shape and destiny of United Project Understanding was drawn.

It has become clear to those who have had a modicum of thought about the tension in our society in light of a new understanding of what racism actually is that the roots of the problem are in the

white community. In response to growing demands by non-whites,

an increasing number of white Americans fear there is no way to

satisfy the non-white community. Whites seem to be in a no-win

situation. Whatever is done can be interpreted by some as

inadequate and mininual, or racist. A few whites, trying not to be

castigated by non-whites, have made extra efforts to be sensitive

to their real desires. They have found a unified demand for justice

but conflicting interpretations of what counts as justice. Sensitive

and concerned whites quickly realize that division within the

non-white community prevents any unified demands from being

placed upon white dominated political, economic, and social

institutions. What must happen then is for whites to come to grips

with the implications of what it means to be white in today's society.

I have mentioned that confusion arises when most whites are

confronted by articulate non-whites who call them racist. I have

given a definition of racism which I feel will help those whites who

are concerned but confused move past the inner tensions generated

in them when they are referred to as racists. To combat racism

means to create the state of mind which allows whites to move past

the tensions which immobilize them and rid themselves of the guilt

feelings which may occur when their participation in today's society

is revealed as racist. This does not free them from accountability

for combating racism but does place responsibility in the proper

place. Long before today's whites were born, racism was born,

and has been perpetuated even in the present. That these whites

benefit from this society makes them accountable, but not

necessarily responsible, for racism. Understanding this, makes

it possible for whites to know that the indictment of racism is not

a personal degradation. It only becomes that when they have been

informed as to the true nature of racism and they refuse to act.

To participate in today's society as a white person means to

participate in racism. To refuse to combat racism means to be a

racist.

There is a certain liberating effect for whites in this

understanding that allows a new state of mobility and productivity.

The Kerner Commission and the Report on the Cities in the 70's

give the grounds for the inner tensions and the possibility of the

feeling of guilt, but the liberation for the whites comes in their

understanding of who they are and what they stand for in light of

what racism is. This comes in the struggle against racism.

> What is at stake for white America today is not what the
> black people want but what white people stand for and do.
> The racial problem in American society is not a "black
> problem". It is a "white problem". If there are racial
> ambiguities, conflict and contradictions in black America,
> it is only because these factors are deeper and more far-
> reaching in white America. The time has come to attack

the causes of the racial crisis, not the victims. We must shift the focus of the problem from black to white. [8]

In the statement above Robert Terry has thus captured the full thrust of what it means to combat racism. To be white does not mean that one is bigoted or is prejudiced but it does mean that he participates in racism. He participates in racism simply because the norms of the society are geared to benefit whites. To participate in any way within this structure is to participate in racism, whether as a victim or as a perpetuator.

To drive this point home in the minds of the participants on the Steering Committee we developed a weekend training session.

The weekend session was planned to cover the time from 5:30 P. M. on Friday until 11:00 P. M. on Saturday. It was suggested and stressed that the participants were expected to remain for the entire training session. This, of course, meant being away from home overnight. This minimal sacrifice was felt to be one indicator of commitment to the Steering Committee and the Project. Most of the persons who had met as the Steering Committee for the first time had been assigned by their ministers. There was little doubt that the Project would be ineffective if the

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[8]Robert Terry, For Whites Only. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 15.

commitment level was only minimal, and the commitment level had
to be known.

The presupposition for doing a weekend training session lay
in a basic understanding. Namely, that one must learn to deal at
more than the superficial level with those with whom he is homo-
geneous before he can relate in a meaningful way in a heterogeneous
situation or setting. But even more than this, it was putting into
practice from an intuitive level what Howard Clinebell and Harvey
Seifert were working out at the intellectual-academic level, the
combining of "Personal Growth and Social Change."[9] Still further,
it was combining Christian ethics with theology by working with the
way man deals with his fellowman in light of his understanding of
who he is as well as his understanding of the Infinite.

I <u>am suggesting</u> that it is this unique combination of the

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[9]Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., and Harvey Seifert, <u>Personal
Growth and Social Change.</u> (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969),
p. 20. "Social action can be considered a therapeutic resource.
Perhaps we ought to speak of social-action therapy along with
occupational therapy, music therapy, or group therapy. Individual
personality disturbances can often be aided by assisting the client
to turn outward toward the community. Through the expression of
wider concern, one may enlarge areas of awareness, knowledge and
sensitivity. Attitudes are changed by exposure and participation.
One's appreciable world is expanded by enlarging his area of
awareness. The white suburbanite needs to live in an interracial
neighborhood for his own growth."

questions of Ethics and Morality, Theology, Pastoral Care and Social Action which has allowed for whatever success and movement which has been made in San Diego. Biblical Studies were not used specifically but there were times when such studies proved helpful.

The Training Sessions.

To get an idea of the way these things fit together it is necessary to look a little more deeply into the sessions themselves. This will also show how they affected the participants.

Exposure weekends: The goal of the entire weekend is the creation of a heightened awareness concerning the suburbanite's way of relating to other human beings, whether these persons are white or non-white. A setting atypical to the normal suburban setting is deemed best for this to be accomplished. The process of creating this awareness is called Exposure Education. [10]

Arrangements for the group to meet at a church in Southeast San Diego were made. To be more specific the church is located within a few blocks of the site of the racial disturbance, minimal as it was, in San Diego's black community a couple of years past. The participants were asked to come to the church by 5:30 P.M. on

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[10]See the Appendix for a statement of objectives and an overview of the weekend.

Friday evening. This caused most participants to miss their

evening meal at home so they were asked to bring some contribution

toward a Pot-luck meal. This gives a sense of contribution and

participation in the group's life with minimal risk. In a small way,

it is the first step toward building a community within the participants.

The Pot-luck style of meal presents several levels of dynamics.

The first, has to do with allowing each person a certain degree of

choice in what he eats which is important to a selective eater. The

second, concerns the person who may not be well acquainted with

the participants with whom he will be participating during weekend

experience. A person who is a stranger to the whole group can begin

to feel a part of the group by virtue of his having contributed to the

meal and sharing the contribution of others. A third is that people

can eat together in large groups without feeling threatened. This is

important to those who are anxious about the experience. A fourth,

is the possibility for the group to be together for a period of time in

a structured unstructured way. This simply means that the group

begins the process of molding itself into whatever it is to become

without specific direction. The last is that the participants are

allowed the opportunity to begin the assuaging of their fears and

uneasiness about being in strange surroundings.

Structured conversation with the group follows the meal. This

helps to further remove the dis-ease the group may feel but data can also be gathered. Facilitators are given data which will be helpful during the weekend but the other participants are made aware of the same data at the same time. Thus the process of developing a common history, common knowledge about others has begun.

Questions used in this phase are of the following order: 1) In the past few days what has been a source of joy for you? 2) What has happened during this same period of time which is a source of pain or sorrow for you? 3) What has happened that you consider comical? This phase is instructive as well as informational because the idea of what these participants perceive racism to be is bared and an understanding of what racism is can be imparted. The following questions are typical questions asked. 1) Where have you seen racism operative in the past week? 2) What have you seen during the past few days which will help to lessen racism? (This question implants the idea that racism can be countered). 3) Does racism exist where you work or in the neighborhood in which you live?

As can be seen the type of questions asked are open-ended in the sense that they allow each participant to respond in his own way. Group discussion is not encouraged at this point. Yet limited group interaction is allowed.

The next phase is to set the contract by which the group will be governed during its time together. It is possible now to be more specific about what we are attempting to accomplish. Again the questioning technique is used to obtain the specific data. 1) What are your expectations for the weekend? 2) What do you expect from us as facilitators? 3) What do you plan to accomplish during the weekend? 4) What are your anxieties about the weekend? What the facilitators expect during the weekend is mentioned at this point. It becomes possible, now, to compare expectations and wants and needs and agree upon the movement for the rest of the time together. It is also made clear that a person who has come for reasons other than those of the majority of the group can leave at this point if he chooses. However, if they continue, full participation is expected.

The point about full participation is emphasized in the next phase of the training. In order to make the session as productive as possible the group is asked to agree to a pattern of behavior. This pattern of behavior is called "norms" and it is decided upon by the group. The whole group is divided into smaller groups, diads, triads, etc., depending on the size of the whole group. The small groups are asked to decide upon those behaviors which would be prohibitive to the accomplishment of the expectations and those which would be facilitative in reaching those expectations.

Once the small groups have made some decisions the total

group is reformed to allow each small group to report its activities

and decisions. The entire group then adopts those ideas from any

of the small groups which it decides will be helpful in keeping

momentum within the total group during the sessions to come. It

is essential to break the total group into small groups first in order

to afford the greatest possible amount of input time from each

participant. In the larger group the more vocal ones tend to dominate.

When the norms have been adopted the participants will have

gone through another significant phase in the life of the group. They

will have made a decision together. This fact alone moves the total

group along the road toward becoming a community. But more than

this they have made an input into the training process which is the

first step towards the group having control of its own destiny. This

is most necessary if the training is to be meaningful and successful.

At this point the group participates in a simulation. Some

scholars and many of my peers think of this type of experience as a

game. I disagree with this use of the term. I prefer "life

enactments" for simulations as a more acceptable phrase than game.

The reason for this opposition comes from the connotation given the

term. In a game one expects, to a great degree, to be entertained.

Persons also tend to be less serious about their participation in

games. I feel that the person participating in any activity is real

and the feelings and experiences within this activity are real.

Therefore, few things are truly games. Furthermore, the human

personality is similar to a diamond, there are many sides to it,

and that side which comes out under the context of simulation is as

authentic as that side which comes out during the "real person"

activities. From this it can be seen that I think of games as

totally artificial situations, with very few real life dimensions,

offering the great opportunity for fantasy. The simulation structures

this out when facilitated properly. "Gaming" is thus acceptable to

me only if it fits my understanding of simulations as life enactments.

The simulation "Star Power", was used during this training

session.[11] It is designed to show a three tiered society much as our

society today is structured. Persons are made aware of the real

life dimensions of this three storied society. Many gain insights into

the effects upon themselves as well as that of others in the dispropor-

tionate distribution of goods. Few participants can experience this

simulation without recognizizing the similarities to our present

society. It can be seen in the simulation that a main component

perpetuating racism is the disproportionate distribution of goods and

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[11]See Appendix for instruction and details of this simulation.

services.   To make the participants aware of this effect on people is a major step in countering racism.

Some of the following dynamics occured for the participants. The dispossessed who were participating in the simulation had feelings of helplessness, were motivated to riot, began to get feelings of illwill against those who represented the possessed and were frustrated that the haves did not show more concern.   The middle group also had a feeling of helplessness, yet, they were happy that they were not a part of the dispossessed.   But by the time the simulation was over they had found that the only way to beat the system, which disenfranchised them as well, was to coalese with the dispossessed.   The "haves" were, as usual, oblivious to the plights of the other two groups.   They felt that they were deserving of the goods and services which were directed toward them.   Few actually wanted to share the wealth when the simulation ended.

The main point which came out of this experience is that the possibility for achievement in the society within the simulation, as well as that in the society at large, does not necessarily come from hard work but a quirk of birth.   If the society is constructed in a specific way to yield its goods and services to a specific group, hard work will not bring about inclusion within the society totally.

After the debriefing of "Star Power" the participants are left

to themselves. This is a time when one to one interaction takes place. Some participants go immediately to the sleeping bags, but, those who have had meaningful insights attempt to reinforce these learnings by sharing with others who are not yet ready to retire. (Among these are those who have had perplexing questions raised, but the answers did not come for them in the debriefing of "Star Power.")

During the breakfast experience another type of awareness is brought to the consciousness of the participants. In the simulation experience some participants usually deny that the actions they revealed during that experience were legitimately theirs, because they were "playing a game". During the breakfast they have to come to grips with selfishness, greed, apathy, possessiveness, and the potential within themselves for violence. This is accomplished by randomly selecting a certain number of the participants to be discriminated against during the meal. The majority of the participants were given a full course breakfast served with much pleasantry. The minority was given Oatmeal, poorly prepared, and little, if any, courtesy is shown by those serving the meal. The one group was placed apart from the other physically as well. The majority was shown to a table which had been set and little extras which make a meal more pleasant were placed on the table. The

minority group was left to fend for itself. More often than not they wound up sitting on the floor.

The dynamics set up by this arrangement helped the participants come to grips with what motivates a person to forcibly acquire food. The real insight came when the participants became aware that they could be moved to such a state over a meal which had an inconsequential bearing on their survival. They had had a full meal the evening before and were far from starving. How much more is one prone to be forceful in acquiring his needs if his day to day existence is full of the disproportionate distribution of goods and services where starvation is a viable possibility.

Many of the participants who were given the full breakfast had to face how unobserving they were. They had eaten most of their meal before they became aware that not all persons were eating a like fare as they. The dilemma of how to share, what to share, and if to share then had to be faced. Should the persons discriminated against decide to take a portion of their food, should they defend against this or allow the food to be taken. They too were not starving. Probably more vividly than ever before did these people become aware of the effects of disproportionate distribution of goods and services during the breakfast experience.

To reinforce this awareness a group of welfare recipients came

in to spend the rest of the morning with the participants in discussion about welfare from the recipient perspective. They heard of varied numbers of discrepancies between what is reported in the media concerning welfare and what actually happens.

The breakfast placed some of the participants in the position of having to accept food from others and to experience how this affected them. Also, they had seen how a particular way of structuring a society could force a person to be in the position of having to accept welfare and not be able to overcome that plight even with hard work. (The necessity of sharing a portion of another's breakfast). It seems needless to say that the combination of these two experiences caused the participants to have a different view of what welfare is all about.[12]

Time for lunch had come. The participants were asked to make use of the time in as meaningful a way as possible. They were asked to acquire their lunch somewhere in the community. They were also asked to interact with the community in any way they could and see what impact this interaction had on the community and

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[12]Many of these participants have been moved to make studies of the situation in San Diego in order to make available more accurate information about welfare. Others have become strong advocates of minimum income. While others are in favor of complete redistribution of goods and services.

upon the participants themselves. Many misperceptions and

prejudices were dispelled as a result of this walk.

The simulation, breakfast, WRO (Welfare Rights Organization)

discussion and the walk in the community had varying degrees of

impact on the participants and a need to tie all these experiences

together was strongly felt in the mid-afternoon. A canned presen-

tation was used at this point to accomplish that task. A phonograph

record by Dick Gregory was used. The record has some history,

some of Gregory's insights about racism, and some suggestions as

to what can be done. [13] Upon the completions of the canned

presentation another meal time had come, this meal was also designed.

It had begun to come out that a real drawback to positive human

interaction was the fact that there is far too little expression of

caring on the part of one human being for another. To begin that

process in this group of participants the meal was prepared in such

a manner that it could be handled easily with the fingers. The

participants were asked to feed each other but not themselves. At

the beginning of the weekend, say at the Pot-luck on Friday, this

would not have been possible. Now the group accepted this assignment

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[13]At later points, when the model has been used for other groups
a casset tape by Tom Skinner is used which has the same emphasis as
Gregory but his terminology is more of the traditionally acceptable
theological terminology.

with a certain degree of eagerness.

At this point in the training a Probation Officer came in and interacted with the group. The officer is black, articulate and skillful in techniques designed to get people to introspect. The questions of "who am I and whom I would like to become?" are ones that the participants were wrestling with. This session is designed to help the participants get some handles on how they can come to grips with these questions. It was designed to have the participants ask questions about their identity, to take that part of their identity they wished to uphold and reincorporate it and to discard that portion of their identity they disliked. [14]

This was probably the most tension filled session of the whole weekend's experience. In many cases the participants experienced an identity death and ressurrection. It was a very emotional time and one in which the participants could demonstrate caring for another individual and at the same time experience being cared for. Upon the completion of this session a celebration was held, a communion service, which allowed all the participants to participate in a group unification experience. Songs were sung and the expressions to each other of the feelings for and about each other was made

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[14]This exercise is called a "life-death exercise".

and the group went home.

Out of that weekend experience came the understanding that another extended session was needed A session designed to consider the conitive input about combating racism. This need led to the development of a weekend around "New White Consciousness".

New White Consciousness Weekend: The New Consciousness weekend began with a pot-luck on Friday and following the meal another simulation was used. The whole of Friday evening was designed to bring the group back into community. The effects of the previous weekend had been tremendous and had affected the individual's interaction in everyday life. He had seen things about his job, his community, his relationships with people which was racist that he would not have been aware of had he not gone on the Exposure Weekend. This new way of interacting with his surroundings caused tensions which were frustrating to the individual and needed to be resolved. But this tension resolution comes, not as one might suppose in going out and attempting to change the world, but in introspection. By coming to terms with one's own participation in racism one realizes that the problem is a "White Problem".

This leads to the "New White Consciousness". Consciousness here means "way of perceiving the world about". It is a different way of perceiving and is thus "new". It is done by "white"

suburbanites. "New White Consciousness" is never a state of being, however, but a state of becoming. Every interaction now brings about new perceptions making the person who has participated in the exposure weekend a dynamic rather than a static being.

What must happen then, is to help the individual cope with this dynamism.

The plan was not to have the tension filled sessions the second weekend that occured the first weekend and this was communicated to the group by not planning an overnight. This session was even planned for one of the local churches.

Saturday of this weekend's session was the most productive because Friday was designed to bring the community back into being. Reforming the community is not being minimized, however.

The first session on Saturday was designed to help those who had experiences during the week, which caused them concern, to label them. The participants were asked to express where they had experienced racism over the past week. This time the response was quite different from that of the first weekend. Most of the participants could cite cases of racism where as during the first weekend few had much to say.

In the second session of the morning the group was asked to assess their values and show how they are undermined, if they are

undermined, by the structures of society in light of their new awareness.

The next session of the morning was concerned with the question "what does it mean to be white in today's society?" The disproportionate distribution of goods and services is inherent in this question.

The time together from that point on was given to the question "as you look back, after two years have past, what changes would you like to see in this society from that of today?" This question forms the beginning effort to counter racism. The participants had defined racism and understood what is meant by the term, had pointed it out and decided how racism undermined the values they hold, and was now being asked to consider changing the society. In some cases they had already decided upon changes they would like to see made before the question was asked, for others this process was begun during that session.

The training received from COMMIT in organizing and change strategy came into play during this time. At some point all the participants were discussing and planning changes they would like to see.[15]

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[15]See Appendix for a detailed list of Change Objectives.

Follow-up: Out of these two weekends came the understanding that continual contact with each other on the part of the participants is needed if the group was to be productive. It was decided by the Steering Committee to meet bi-weekly on Saturday at 7:30 A. M. This in itself was a significant change for many of the participants since Saturday is the day when most of the family can be together and everything planned for the family must be delayed until after the Steering Committee has met. It was also an indicator of the depth to which they had commited themselves to the Project.

The learnings from these sessions formed the basis upon which the In-service training for teachers in the Lemon Grove School district was designed and conducted. That model included two weekends, one of exposure and one of consciousness awareness, and three two hour follow-up sessions. The basic format for this training was the same as the sessions for the Steering Committee. The basic difference in the sessions came because the perspective from which the participants viewed their existence and participation in life was different. One group saw itself as Christians from a church going about their Christian commitment. The other group saw itself as a group of individuals trying to find ways of coping with a tremendous problem which affected their effectiveness as teachers. Though the terminology was different

in the training of the groups the end result was the same.

The basic need for community is strongly felt and the lack

of community causes the tensions to form internally which allow one

to become more concerned about himself and less and less concerned

for his fellowman. This is another way of stating the root cause of

racism. To recognize that I can be affirmed by affirming others is

an important step in the cure of racism. Negative images against

which a positive self-image must be bounced are no longer needed.

> The problem of values is not that white people need to
> instill values in the ghetto; but white society itself needs
> values so that it will no longer need a ghetto. [16]

But even more than this the need for community transcends the

external barriers which allows for Cone's final statement in his

book Black Theology and Black Power.

> Being black in America has very little to do with skin
> color. To be black means that your heart, your soul,
> your mind, and your body are where the dispossessed
> are. We all know that a racist structure will reject and
> threaten a black man in white skin as quickly as a black
> man in black skin. It accepts and rewards whites in
> black skins nearly as well as whites in white skins.
> Therefore, being reconciled to God does not mean that
> one's skin is physically black. It essentially depends
> on the color of your heart, soul, and mind. Some may
> want to argue that persons with skins physically black
> will have a running start on others; but there seems to
> be· enough evidence that though one's skin is black the

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[16]James Cone, Black Theology and Black Power. (New York:
Seabury Press, 1969), p. 151

> heart may be lily white. The real questions are: <u>where is</u>
> <u>your being? Does it lie with the oppressed blacks or with</u>
> <u>the white oppressors?</u> [17]

This is fundamentally the understanding which motivates my input into the project. It has rubbed off on the Steering Committee as can be seen from the efforts these training sessions caused the Steering Committee to make. [18]

<u>Impact On Steering Committee.</u>

It must be recognized that the preceeding material in this chapter comes from a reflection covering a span of twenty-two months. Therefore, there are possible insights which have come subsequent to the training events but have been discussed as part of those factors motivating the development of the training model. This factor is deemed of minor significance compared with the impact on the Steering Committee coming from the training sessions within the model. Particularly, is it insignificant, when one recognizes that the model has become a packaged training model used on numberous occasions, with comparable results to that of the

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[17]<u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 151-152.

[18]In the Appendix statements by some of the Steering Committee are shown.

Steering Committee, with Teachers and Administrators from the Lemon Grove, California School District, as well as other members from the Churches than the Steering Committee members.

Staff Objectives: To put into perspective how the training sessions fit into the whole of United Project Understanding (U. P. U.) it can be seen that they grew out of the Staff's Objectives when we first arrived in San Diego to work with the Project. The objectives were fourfold:

1) To develop a cohesive, highly motivated body of key actors out of the representatives from the churches, commited to the elimination of racism. To do this it was decided that the Steering Committee needed proficiency in the following areas:

a) Group Process (The ability to facilitate group discussion and activity).

b) Evaluation of issues and situations.

c) Personal understanding of one's own position and knowledge of racism.

d) Becoming activists rather than linguists.

2) Work with the Steering Committee in setting up machinery which enables the churches to come to grips with the issues of racism.

3) To set up machinery designed to help the churches extend its ministry into the fight against racism within its community.·

4) To bring about a close alliance between the church and the community on the issues of racism and how to deal with them.

The Steering Committee's Change Objectives: A few weeks of work at bringing about the first of the Staff's Objectives resulted in the Project's Steering Committee deciding that it would work toward having a more colorful (pluralistic) Heartland, (the area of San Diego in which U. P. U. operates is called the Heartland). This was understood to involve attacking all areas which keep the Heartland basically white inhabited.

The decision to work toward making the Heartland multi-ethnic (colorful), resulted in these specific change objectives for the Steering Committee:

1) To affect fifty job placements for non-whites.

2) To make it possible for twenty-five non-white families to move into the Heartland.

3) To impact the educational system causing it to constructively deal with racism.

4) To find ways of correcting institutional racism within the denominational as well as the local church.

These four main objectives were drawn from the objectives decided upon during the training sessions previously discussed. An extended list of objectives can be found in the Appendix.

It can be seen from the list of objectives listed above and the extended list found in the Appendix that the training sessions caused the essence of the project in the Heartland of San Diego to be one of organizing to fight racism in the church as well as the suburban

community.

<u>Evaluation of Objectives</u>: The Staff's Objectives were basically maintenance and process oriented, leaving change objectives to the Steering Committee. In most cases the objectives have been accomplished beyond expectation. The depth of <u>community,</u> the sense of caring and sharing, experienced by the Steering Committee members and Staff has been a rewarding experience. Strong commitment to the Project and its objectives is evident in the fact the Project was continued a second year and efforts are under way to continue a third and a fourth and so on until racism is eliminated. Likewise, a willingness of Steering Committee members to place themselves in risk taking situations involving direct conflict within both the churches and the community indicates a high degree of commitment. Finally, the energy put into the task forces (small groups from the Steering Committee assigned the responsibility of facilitating one of the specific objectives), indicate a high level of motivation.

Especially interesting has been the spiritual struggle going on in many of the Steering Committee members. The nature of the Project calls for a thorough examination of values and priorities within one's own life style. In the midst of this examination one is called on in many ways to find new sources of spiritual strength.

It is in this in the midst of this search for new sources of spiritual strength that Cone's message of a new perspective from which theologizing must be done takes on meaning for these people.

Four task forces were set up to facilitate the change objectives of the Steering Committee: Education, Housing, Jobs, and Institutional Racism in the Churches. Greatest progress has been made in the area of education. At first this may appear inconsistent with my belief that the church is the most likely institution to be successful in countering racism. Actually, it is supportive of my thesis. The fact that these few people representing the church could exert enough pressure to cause movement in another institution is an indication of what might happen when and if the whole Church is mobilized.

Two targets were set by the Educational Task Force: Public education at the elementary level, and the churches involved in the Project. Within elementary education the efforts were to affect attitudes of teachers to the extent they would actively search out curriculum and other resources that aid in the development of racial awareness and understanding on the part of their pupils.

The task force has workers in three school districts: Lemon Grove, La Mesa-Spring Valley, and El Cajon. The Lemon Grove School District has sponsored the In-service training for teachers,

previously mentioned, as well as hired the Staff as human relations

consultants for the entire district. The El Cajon Valley School

District will have its "Title I" teachers involved in In-service

training the Summer and Fall of 1972. The La Mesa-Spring Valley

School District will continue to send its teachers to In-service

training done by the other two districts when openings are available.

It is noteworthy that I mention the fact that teachers are granted

three units credit through San Diego State College for participating

in the training. This is added incentive to teachers to participate

in the training.

This task force has also facilitated classes on racial

awareness in all of the churches. As a result of these classes,

laymen from outside the U. P. U. Steering Committee have decided

to lead future classes.

Distribution of materials dealing with racism and how to

combat it was another strategy of the Educational Task Force which

has been quite successful in impacting the churches and the commun-

ity. A great deal of material has been disseminated. These

materials include many copies of For Whites Only, Black Theology

and Black Power, Rivers of Blood and Years of Darkness and

numerous other books which were felt to be enlightening to the

reader concerning racism and its effects, scores of copies of

Ebony Magazine , August 1970 issue which deals with the Separation, Integration, Segregation debate, study sheets, and copies of a bibliography prepared by the Steering Committee.

The Jobs Task Force has had more difficulty in achieving its original objective. The research done by this task force indicates that the Heartland is basically a "bedroom community" which means that the types of jobs availbable are not enticing to non-whites. Industry is nonexistant and except for the one Shopping Center, which is actually situated outside the area described as the Heartland but immediately adjacent to its border, the jobs available are menial task type jobs.

Part of the difficulty is due to the fact that the task force has had a hard time envisioning the kind of machinery needed to facilitate job placement and recruitment since the type of establishments in the Heartland are basically family owned and operated.

None of the Steering Committee are involved in large business, but following a newspaper article concerning racist remarks made by a police officer, the Chamber of Commerce of La Mesa set up a Human Relations Committee which has decided to make job placement its primary concern. Through combining efforts with this committee the U. P. U. task force has begun to effect some of the Project's objectives concerning jobs.

The Housing Task Force has achieved limited success. The main thrust of its efforts has been directed towards the Real Estate industry. Secondary objectives include such things as having realtors advertise in non-white community newspapers, in their total advertising projects indicate a willingness to be an "open" firm, accept non-white realtors on the La Mesa Board of Realtors since a previous applicant had been rejected, and participate in human relations training.

The task force on Institutional Racism in the Church was originally placed in the hands of the clergy. However, it was decided to shift this responsibility to a lay-clergy responsibility. This added dimension has helped tremendously in getting the task force moving. The problem here is the image of the clergy and the resistence to other than "pastoral" roles which they play.

One of the churches has dealt with institutional racism by asking each committee and board in the church to use the paper "Discrimination in the Church" in assessing its practices. The Official Board of this church also spent one evening dealing with the concepts of institutional and attitudinal racism.

Each church has also endorced a commitment statement along with other community organizations indicating a desire for a more pluralistic community. This endorsement is viewed as an

important step for churches because it indicates the recognition of the need for institutional stands.

Finally, by indicating the willingness to continue the Project, it is shown that the awareness that racism cannot be eliminated by sporatic and short term efforts, has been created.

It is also significant that all the churches in the Project have had increased non-white participation in the life of the church since United Project Understanding was initiated.

CHAPTER VI

THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MODEL

In considering the model previously discussed in light of our

understanding of Black Theology as the same as Christian Theology,

we must ask what has been the role of the church in the past, what

is its present stand, and what implication does this have for the

future.

There can be little doubt that the Church has supported the

racist institutions of this society, which means that a theology

speaking out against racism had to come into being. That new

theology must speak to the Church in its own language. "Black

Theology" does that. This means that the past has set the stage

for a new way of theologizing.

United Project Understanding must take the knowledge that

the Church is basically racist itself and create an atmosphere in

which this theology of the oppressed can be heard and understood.

It must create an atmosphere in which there is a pluralism

commensurate with the Christ relevant to both whites and non-whites.

That United Project Understanding is active in this arena indicates

that some are concerned as to what the nature of the church will be

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and how it will function in the next few years.

Inherent in the activity of U. P. U. is the basic argreement that God is moving through the activity of those who are striving to liberate the oppressed. In fact, as the description of the model indicates, the project Steering Committee has sided with the oppressed. Now the struggle is properly placed in the white community. This is but a small step by only five churches but it is the beginning.

These three main points are inherent in the model which I have discussed: Christian Community is essential, the Church is a key institution in the .effort to counter racism; if the "church" is truly an expression of Jesus Christ, it demonstrates that it is anti-Christian to participate consciously in racism.

I have pointed out previously that the first step in understanding Christian Theology is to understand Christian Community. To understand this community is to understand the individuals who make up the community. In the model an entire weekend has been devoted to community building. This is done at the beginning of each year in which the project has existed. When working with a group of people for the first time a significant portion of time is devoted to community building.

The thrust of this effort is to make it possible for each person

to come to a conscious[1] understanding of himself and how he relates

to other beings. This aids him in removing the need for negative

external images, against which he has need to see himself positively.

It also makes it possible for the group of individuals to become

mutually supportive of each other, showing love and caring for each

other.

Unless this is done, the community built as a caring and

sharing community, there is no Christian Community and likewise

little change for involving the church relevantly in the struggle against

racism. This leads us to the second implication found in the model

"The Church is a key institution in the effort to counter racism",

this I believe strongly. I see the church as the symbol of man's

religious beliefs. It has been mentioned that "man is incurably

religious."[2] Rather than go into a lengthy discussion of what

religion is I will say that, for me, religion is that activity which

causes man to take himself and his world seriously. It follows that

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[1]I have pointed out previously that persons are not always
conscious of their participation in racism.

[2]Too many people have distorted perceptions of themselves and
are therefore distorted in their view of the relationship they have with
others. It is in the quality of this relationship with others that we
see God reflected in human interaction. It is the task of the commun-
ity to help an individual see himself as others see him.

one does not have to consider himself "religious" in the context of
what this word has meant, to be religious in terms of what I
understand to be religion.

It must be stated that my definition of "church" is also broader
than the traditionally limited understanding of "church".

From this it follows when man's core perceptions, those things
out of which he regulates his world, are involved in activity of any
sort he is also compelled to be involved in that activity. Since
the church is the symbol of man's religious beliefs it carries far
more impact than other institutions when decisions are made and
supported by the Church.

In contemporary times this view of the church and religion may
seem rather out-dated but I feel that the perceptions in the minds of
a significant number of people are sufficiently strong to maintain
credence in the view. This leads us to the third implication found
in the model.

To be an expression of Jesus Christ the church must demon-
strate it is anti-Christian to be conscious participants in racism.
To say more than "to be Christian means to reflect Christ,"[3] seems
to be using needless arguments. To say that racism is not a

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[3]Charles Samuel Braden, The World's Religions. (New York:
Abingdon, 1954), p. 15.

reflection of Christ is exactly what is the antithesis of Christ. To reflect Christ means to work for reconciliation of man with man, man with the world and man with God. One sure way for this to be done is for the church to become involved in efforts to counter racism. The Project has involved these churches in that struggle.

APPENDIXES

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APPENDIX A

OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

OF

AWARENESS WEEKENDS

OBJECTIVES:

The basic goal of an awareness weekend is to give participants a broader understanding of the dynamics of racism in our society; to foster a committment to dealing with racism at both an individual and institutional level and to facilitate a deeper awareness of community and power among participants.

Specific objectives include:

A. Enter into dialogue with non-whites who can articulate the effects of racism.

B. Identify "the problem" in terms of need for self-change rather than projecting a problem "out there" which is beyond our influence.

C. Develop a base of committment motivated from self-understanding rather than white quilt.

D. Develop an intimate support group (community) with skills in identifying both needs and strategy for change.

E. Heighten awareness of the tension between the depth

of problem of racism and one's power as a change agent.

AN OVERVIEW:

The weekend begins at 5:30 Friday evening and lasts through Saturday night at 10:30. It takes place at Calvary Presbyterian Church located at 39th and Franklin in Southeast San Diego. Dinner on Friday is pot luck. Breakfast and dinner on Saturday will be provided at the church and lunch can be purchased in the community. We will sleep at the church on the floor (a few cots are available), so bring sleeping bags.

Methodologies and exercises include:

Table Raps
Norm setting
Simulation experiences
Decision making
Trust building
Encounters with Community People:
  Welfare recipients
  Ministers from non-white churches
  Black probation supervisor
  Chicano community workers
"Soul" meals
Walk in the community
Records and tapes
Celebration - art implosion

APPENDIX B

STAR POWER

by R. Garry Shirts

This is a game in which a low mobility three-tiered society is built through the distribution of wealth in the form of chips. Participants have a chance to progress from one level of society to another by acquiring wealth through trading with other participants. Once the society is established, the group with the most wealth is given the right to make the rules for the game. They generally make rules which the other groups consider to be unfair, fascistic and racist. A revolt against the rules and the rule-makers generally ensues. When this occurs, the game is ended. The game is useful for raising questions about the uses of power in a competitive society.

I. PREPARING FOR THE GAME

Dividing the Participants and Assigning Chips.

The participants are divided into three approximately equal groups named: squares, circles, and triangles. Each person wears a symbol representing his group, i.e., the squares wear a square symbol, the circles a circular symbol and the triangles a triangular

symbol.

Each participant is given five chips. Each square receives one gold chip, one green chip and the remaining three randomly selected from the colors red, white, and blue. Each circle is given one green chip and the remaining four selected from the colors red, white and blue. The triangles are given a random assortment of red, white, and blue chips. The only exception to this distribution is that one circle and one triangle receive the same distribution as the squares, i. e., one gold, one green, and a random assortment of red, white and blue.

Determining the Chips Required for a Game.

The TOTAL number of chips required equals: 5 x number of participants.

The number of GOLD chips required equals: The number of squares plus 2.

The number of GREEN chips required equals: The number of squares plus the number of circles plus 1.

The number of RED, WHITE, and BLUE chips required equals: 5 x number of participants minus the total number of green and gold chips required. There should be about an equal number of red, white and blue chips.

Example: Suppose you have 34 people and divide them into 12

squares, 12 circles, and 10 triangles. The total number of chips required equals: 5 x 34 or 170. The total number of GOLD chips required equals: 12 (the number of squares) plus 2 or 14. The total number of GREEN chips required equals: 12 (the number of squares) plus 12 (the number of circles) plus 1 or 25. The total number of RED, WHITE, and BLUE chips required equals: 170 - (14 plus 25) or 131 which means about 44 of each color.

Explaining the Rules

1. Tell the participants that this is a game that involves trading and bargaining and that the three persons with the highest scores will be declared the winner. They will probably ask later in the game if there is going to be a group winner. The answer is: "The three individuals with the highest scores will be declared the winners." Do not tell them that a group is going to be given the right to make the rules for the game.

2. Explain the following scoring system to the participants:

> Every gold chip is worth 50 points
>
> Every green chip is worth 25 points
>
> Every red chip is worth 15 points
>
> Every white chip is worth 10 points
>
> Every blue chip is worth 5 points

Additional points are given if a person is able to get several

points of the same color.

Five chips of the same color are worth 20 points

Four chips of the same color are worth 10 points

Three chips of the same color are worth 5 points

No extra points are given for two chips of the same color

Example: A person's total score if he had 5 gold chips would
be 250 plus 20 for 5 chips of the same color for a total of 270 points.
If he had four blue chips and one red chip, his score would equal
4 x 5 (for the blue chips) plus 15 (for the red chip) plus 10 points for
distribution of the same color for a total of 45 points. Three reds
and two blues would equal 45 plus 5 plus 10 or 60 points. Five reds:
75 plus 20 or 95 points.

3. Distribute the chips as outlined previously to the squares,
circles and triangles.

4. Explain the following rules of bargaining.

a. They have ten minutes to improve their scores.

b. They improve their scores by trading advantageously
with other squares, circles and triangles.

c. Persons must be holding hands to effect a trade.

d. Only one for one trades are legal. Two for one or any
other combinations are illegal.

e. Once participants touch the hand of another participant

a chip of unequal value or color must be traded. If a couple cannot consummate a trade they may have to hold hands for the entire ten minutes trading session.

f. There is no talking unless hands are touching. <u>This Rule Should Be Strictly Enforced.</u>

g. Persons with folded arms do not have to trade with other persons.

h. All chips should be hidden. <u>This Rule Should Be Strictly Enforced.</u>

i. Do not reveal that the squares are given chips of a higher value than the circles or triangles.

j. Any other rules that you deem appropriate.

II. START THE TRADING SESSION

1. After the rules have been explained, start the trading session. Tell them it will last 10 minutes.

2. During the trading session, your assistant should be putting each participant's initials on the blackboard.

3. After 10 minutes of trading session, have each group return to their circle of chairs.

4. Have the participants compute their scores for the trading session, record them on their score sheet and hand the score sheet to your assistant.

5. Have your assistant record the scores on the blackboard opposite the person's initials. (The initials and their scores can be put on by the participants themselves if an assistant is not available.)

6. Explain the rules for the bonus points session. The rules are:

a. Hold up a bonus chip (a double chip) and tell them that this is a bonus point chip.

b. Give each group three chips.

c. Tell them that each chip is worth 20 points.

d. Their task during the bonus session is to distribute the bonus chips to members of their group.

e. The chips must be distributed in units of 20 or more, that is, one person might receive all 3 bonus chips and 60 points or 3 people might receive 1 chip each worth 20 points, but 6 people could not receive 10 points each.

f. They have five minutes to distribute the bonus chips. If the groups have not distributed the chips at the end of the five minutes, the points will be taken back by the director and no one will receive them.

g. The decision regarding the distribution of chips must be unanimous vote.

h. Participants can eliminate people from their group by a majority vote. (Eliminated people can form another group. They should be a triangle group.)

7. Answer any questions.

8. Start the bonus chip bargaining session.

9. After about five or ten minutes, end the bonus chip bargaining session.

10. Have those people who receive bonus points record them on the blackboard opposite their initials.

11. Put those people with the highest total scores in the square group. If there is a circle or a triangle who has a higher score than a square, have them trade groups. Any changes should be announced to the group and it generally is made known that so and so who was a square has become a circle, because they did not receive enough points, and so and so who was a circle, is now a square because they received a higher number of points than a square. In any event, it is important that the group know that the squares are made up of those people with the highest scores.

12. Start the second round.

NOTE: Repeat this cycle--bargaining session, bonus session, reclassification for one or two times or until the participants understand the process and the fact that the

squares are high scorers.

13. After about the second bonus session, announce that the squares now have the authority to make the rules for the game and that while any group can suggest rules for the game the squares will decide which rules will be implemented. You might tell the squares that they might want to make rules like: re-distribute the chips on a more equal basis, require triangles and circles to bargain with the squares even though they have their arms folded, require triangles and circles to give squares the chips they ask for regardless of whether they want to trade or not, etc. Announce any rules that the squares establish to all of the participants unless they want them kept a secret.

14. From then on, play it by ear.

What is likely to happen is that the squares will make very tough rules that protect their own power. This has happened in every organized group that we have played it with so far. The circles and triangles will either give up, organize, become hostile, or commit an act of frustration and defiance. Stop the game when it is evident that the squares have made rules which the others consider unfair and fascistic. This is generally after two to four rounds. After the game, gather the group together and discuss the implications of the game for the real world.

Some questions you might want to discuss at the end of the game:

    a. Are there any parallels between the system set up by the game and the system or sub-systems in which we live?

    b. Does the game say anything about the nature of man?

    c. Is it the nature of man to seek inequality? To attempt to be better than his fellow man, to seek for more privileges and wealth? If yes, is there a moral alternative to man's search for inequality?

    d. Would it have made much difference if the people who were the circles had been the squares?

    e. Were the squares acting with legitimate authority?

    f. Are there any parallels between the game and the race problem, the campus problems, the problems faced by our founding fathers?

    g. If an entire group acts in unison, such as the circles and triangles frequently do in going against the squares, do their actions have more legitimacy than when a person acts alone?

    h. Is the square a masculine or feminine symbol?

    i. Would it be possible to develop a game which emphasizes cooperative behavior and is fun to play?

III. SUMMARY OF RULES FOR RUNNING STAR POWER

1. Prepare distribution of chips.

2. Divide participants into three groups.

3. Distribute symbols to appropriate groups.

4. Distribute chips.

5. Explain rules for trading session.

6. Have the group trade for 10 minutes or so.

7. After ten or so minutes stop trading session and have the participants return to their original group.

8. Have them record scores on slips.

9. Give three bonus chips to each group.

10. Explain rules for bonus chips to each group.

11. Give the participants five to ten minutes for bonus chip session.

12. While they are in bonus group session, collect all the chips originally distributed and prepare them for the second round of distribution.

13. End bonus chip session.

14. Revise the scores on the board to reflect points received from the bonus chips.

15. Promote high scoring persons to squares and demote low scoring squares to circles or triangles.

END OF FIRST ROUND

16. Repeat process.

17. After second or third round give rights to make rules for the game to the squares.

18. Play it by the nose from then on.

One note of caution. Generally groups need to talk about the game in personal terms or, "who did what to whom" before going on to the issues involved. This can be an important experience in interpersonal relationships, helping members of the group understand their reaction to authority, competitive situations, etc. However, it is important that this discussion does not damage the ego, status or self-concept of any of the participants. If you see the discussion going beyond the point of friendly rivalry, then you might direct it more forcibly toward the issues involved rather than the personalities. If in the unlikely event that the squares are being badly scapegoated, then you might point out that every group that had participated in the game thus far had reacted in essentially the same manner and in general try to direct the discussion toward the question of whether any group put in such a situation would act any differently.

APPENDIX C

NEW WHITE CONSCIOUSNESS SEMINAR

FOLLOW-UP

I. OBJECTIVES

The following is a compilation of the objectives out-lined during the final session of the New White Consciousness Seminar. Many of these objectives are duplications of the objectives that the Steering Committee has already set, however many are new considerations.

II. GROUP I

What we'd like to have seen done!

Black ministers and staff

Non-whites active in all 4 of our congregations

An on-going movement in our churches and community to carry on UPU

New White Seminars staged for our congregations

A "REAL" change in attitude in regard to racism in a significant number in our congregations and community.

Natural multi-racial experiences in all facets of our heartland area--celebrations, picnics, play, learning, etc.

U. S. history taught from the perspective of the "New White" consciousness

"Theologizing" from the perspective of the "New White" consciousness

Want to see non-whites in responsible positions in the Heartland Area, i.e., policemen, firemen, middle management

A non-white elected to office in our community, i.e, school board

Exposure education weekends

Our white congregations linking up with black congregations on a "significant" level

Crossing color lines as far as adoption

Building somekind of supportive community in the Heartland Area that would assist non-whites in finding a "home"

Steps we're willing to take:

1. Use UPU's staff men (our black and white team) to set up series of "New White" seminars and exposure weekends.

2. In conjunction with above, we'll get the people to attend.

3. Practice (try to design) a "New White" consciousness theology.

4. ETC., ETC., ETC.!!

5. Make direct contact with Wilson Riles -- that we are a

supportive community -- USE US!

III. GROUP II

A year from now we will rejoice that:

    1. UPU is an existing organization that can deal with issues.

    2. New White Consciousness Seminars have been held; two at each church (governing boards).

    3. New White Consciousness Seminars; one in each school district.

    4. Black, Indian and Chicano studies in each school.

    5. Addition of one minority teacher in each district.

    6. Jobs for 50 minorities in Heartland area.

    7. Homes for 25 families (minority) in Heartland area.

    8. Low income housing in Heartland area.

    9. White Citizens' Council formed to protect Heartland area from UPU.

    10. New White Consciousness Seminar for pastors in Heartland area.

    11. New White Consciousness Seminar for realtors in Heartland area.

IV. GROUP III

The four UPU churches have shown a conscious change of direction towards the elimination of racism because:

    1. Two hundred lay leaders have attended White Consciousness

Seminars.

2.   Each S. C. member was successful in seeing that ten people have read <u>For Whites Only.</u>

3.   25% of each congregation has read <u>The White Problem,</u> in study group settings.

4.   One hundred people have attended exposure weekends.

5.   Increased minority participation in the four churches.

6.   Instrumental in placing a member on the C. H. R. C.

7.   An interracial task force has studied welfare issues, met with State representatives and were instrumental in proposing legislation to humanize/reform welfare procedures.

8.   One hundred organizations in the Heartland area joined UPU in a commitment to welcome minority families to the Heartland area.

9.   Fifty jobs for minorities were secured.

10.   Twenty-five houses for minorities were secured.

11.   UPU sponsored a N. W. C. Seminar for in service training for teachers in the Lemon Grove School District.

12.   A hospitality group was established to welcome new comers.

13.   By the act of God we did more than we thought we could!

APPENDIX D

UNITED PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

By this time most of you are aware that our church is one of four churches in the Heartland Area involved in United Project Understanding, an ecumenical effort partially financed by a private industrial foundation grant, coordinated by two seminarians from the Southern California School of Theology at Claremont, the purpose of which is to study and attempt to find creative, constructive solutions to the problem of racism in white suburbia.

United Project Understanding is a great deal more than those lofty sounding words. It means crawling out of bed on chilly Saturday mornings in time to get to 7:30 a. m. meetings, and feeling rewarded for the effort by the stimulation of working with dedicated people and ministers from the four churches who see a vision of a better world. It is being exposed to life as some people are forced to live it in the ghettos. It is re-evaluating our own attitudes, being forced to come to grips with what we really believe. It is taking the risk of being alienated from friends who think differently. It is spending a whole weekend away from family, grappling with concepts sometimes new and frightening, being in situations which force us to think.

It provides the opportunity to get to know people of other races, to worship together in a fully integrated church, to be confronted by blacks with the information that we may be considered useless do-gooders. Through the project we become painfully aware of the vast problem, the cancer of white racism. We realize that a "new white consciousness" is necessary for all of us, that whites in suburbia can no longer pretend that "we" have no problem, that "they" in the ghettos are the only ones with a problem. It is challenging and frustrating. It is both hopeless and hopeful, we feel alternately pessimistic and optimistic.

Can we really accomplish anything, can white attitudes be changed? Obviously we don't know the answer. But with the help of our seminarians, our steering committee, the help and support of the congregations and ministers of the four churches and, most of all, with the help of God we can try.

<div align="right">Joan Teague</div>

Below are some exerpts taken from individual evaluations of Steering Committee members:

"The past eight months have been very meaningful in my life. I have felt a very deep sense of commitment to the goals of UPU and I find more and more of the reading and listening I've been doing has affected my thinking, my topics of conversation and, of course, my life style.

I feel I have been greatly enlightened about many areas of life that I really never considered before (e. g. the maintenance of a white status quo system and the subtlity with which it is perpetuated).

I have not been an avid reader since college but find myself constantly in the middle of another of the books recommended (and then only to find two or three more that I MUST read when I get time).

After these eight months I sense an "internalization" of this reading, the steering committee discussions and many small group discussions. I can finally discuss "the white problem" with some background and knowledge. "

"In summary what I'm saying is this: Our groundwork has only recently been laid and I don't feel we can even begin to be fully effective until next year. We still need your guidance at least one more year -- even if it must be only on a consultant basis or in an advisory capacity. "

"This has been the most challenging and stimulating committee on which I have ever served. In the past, most committees have involved much talk and little action. Now, for a change, we can see things actually happening, perhaps not enough or not fast enough, but progress nevertheless. The sense of community among members of the steering committee and the staff is unusual and the dedication to the project is pronounced. We must do everything we can to

insure continuance. "

"Through the reading of The White Problem I realized that I

must be willing to do my own thing. I can not think up work for

other people, but I can be creative by undertaking new ventures

that I know I am capable of because of my talents, my interests,

my contacts with other people who might be in positions of civic

leadership where something can be done. Likewise, no one can

really set down what I would or should not, could or could not do. "

"My association with the UPU staff and steering committee

has provided spiritual and moral support on various occasions when

my vocational work at Lincoln High School had reduced me to a

discouraged, disenchanted person. It has provided me with insights

on ways to be effective when I have felt ineffective. It has given me

a broader perspective when experiences had narrowed my focus. It

has helped me be able to evaluate myself more accurately with regard

to my feelings about people of other races and it has brought me into

contact with their feelings about themselves and people of my racial

heritage. "

"Personally, I have benefited a great deal (from UPU). The

project has caused me a great deal of pain -- within myself, my

family and what I want to do in the community. I realize that I am

trying very hard to "find myself" and know that my value as a

"leader" is not now what it should be. I am very dedicated to attitudinal change. I believe when I can find peace within myself I'll be able to help more outwardly."

"Before UPU I too must have felt that our job was "down there somewhere". For Whites Only and other materials plus N. W. C. seminars clarified much of my personal role in combating racism. There have been other phases of this growth. After the "stormy" sessions at the La Mesa First Methodist Church, I realized how often we do learn from our failures!

The institutional changes we have seen happen in the community; black realtor on the board in La Mesa, consent of city council to four or more Human Relations Seminars next year, N. W. C. seminars happening not only in Lemon Grove School District, but being prepared for in others, classes at Patrick Henry Adult School, repercussions in discussions with those not in the project, the impact on youth who have had much contact with staff, all of these are the beginnings of great things to come! Then there are the bridges of understanding and hope which the staff have built to the black community, the Lincoln-Grossmont incident follow-up, the other incidents at Lincoln and other far reaching contacts with key people. As one of our church members put it so aptly, 'The groundwork has been well laid, if we can just hold on next year we

will really see it blossom'"

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